

ANGLO- SOVIET JOURNAL

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Organ of the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR

HEAVY INDUSTRY AND THE SOVIET CONSUMER

R. W. Davies

I

THE most important single feature of Soviet industrial development in the first four years (1951 to 1954) of the fifth five-year plan has been the rapid expansion of the output of consumer goods, which is stated to have increased at an average rate of some 10 per cent per annum, and to stand at over 60 per cent above the 1950 level, double that of pre-war. As a result, the five-year plan for the growth of retail trade in state and co-operative stores was more than fulfilled in the first four years of the plan.⁽¹⁾

This will be the first of the five-year plans in which the programme for consumer goods has been overfulfilled (their output is planned to reach 71 per cent above the 1950 level in 1955, as compared with the 65 per cent originally planned). In the 1930s, the increasing danger of war repeatedly led the government to divert additional resources to the heavy and armaments industries. During the present five-year plan, on the other hand, additional man-power and materials, above what was originally planned, have been diverted to the consumer goods industries.⁽²⁾ Their output in consequence increased *more rapidly* than did the output of heavy industry, in both 1953 and 1954, for the first time since the 1920s.

The increased supply of articles of everyday use has been passed on to the consumer through the annual price reductions. The average earnings of the Soviet wage-earner are over double what they were in 1940⁽³⁾, and successive cuts in prices since 1947 have reduced the high price-level of immediately after the war, so that the index of food prices stands at only 14 per cent above 1940, and that of industrial consumer goods at only 27 per cent above 1940⁽⁴⁾. Prices fell by more than a quarter in the four years 1951-1954.

How did it come about that the Soviet government could devote more attention to the direct improvement of the position of the consumer than at previous periods? Firstly, the economy was now more powerful than at any earlier stage. In 1954, steel production stood at 40 million tons; when the first five-year plan was launched in 1928 it was only 4 million tons, and by 1940 it had risen to 18 million. The veteran Soviet economist Strumilin has suggested that at the present stage in the development of the economy "raising the consumption level of the working people 30-40 per cent in 2 or 3 years . . . would not require a significant hold-up in the general growth of means of production".

¹ These official figures find general acceptance among critical Western students of the Soviet economy. Thus Mr. P. J. D. Wiles writes (in the *Bulletin* of the Oxford Institute of Statistics, Vol. 16, No. 11-12, 1954) that they are "only slightly exaggerated" and "show an immensely rapid growth after the war in consumption". This view contrasts with that expressed by more popular writers who have spoken of "a mere trickle" of consumer goods (*Manchester Guardian*, January 12, 1955), and of the "fiasco of the drive for a rapid rise in the Soviet standards of living" (Mr. Isaac Deutscher, *ibid.*, February 9, 1955).

² For details, see *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL*, Vol. XV, No. 1, 1954.

³ "In 1953 the average monthly earnings of all workers and employees in the USSR was 201 per cent of 1940" (*Politicheskaya ekonomiya*, 1954, p. 462).

⁴ Beer and wine still sell at over 50 per cent above the pre-war price, however, and the price of vodka is more than double that of pre-war.

Secondly, the relative easing of international tension, particularly during 1953 and part of 1954, gave the Soviet government some grounds for relaxing its defence efforts. In 1953 and 1954, Soviet defence expenditure remained almost stationary, while the economy as a whole expanded considerably ; and this meant that a considerable amount of the extra resources available could be channelled to serve the direct needs of the consumer ⁽⁵⁾.

II

HOWEVER, at the end of 1954, the Soviet government drew attention to its view that the international situation had worsened as a result of the agreement to re-arm Western Germany, and stated that "the Soviet Union and other peace-loving countries will take all the necessary measures to strengthen their armaments" (*Soviet News*, December 10, 1954).

Following this, the 1955 budget statement in January announced that defence spending would be increased by 12 per cent. The Soviet government decided that this increase must not be made at the expense of completing the five-year plan for heavy industry ; and in 1955 the rate of increase of consumer goods production and the amount invested in the light and food industries have been reduced. Thus in 1955 industrial production as a whole is to increase by 9 per cent, the output of heavy industry (including armaments) by 12 per cent, and that of consumer goods by some 5 per cent.

These developments must be considered against the background of the price-cuts and the increases in money earnings (real wages have increased by 37 per cent in 1951-4, according to Khrushchov, while productivity in industry has increased by only 33 per cent). Although the supply of consumer goods rose rapidly in the past four years, the increase was insufficient to meet the more rapid rise of the real purchasing power of the Soviet citizen. This has led to shortages in Soviet shops. Immediately after the war, Khrushchov has pointed out, prices were high and there were fewer shortages, but now "demand has grown tremendously because the people have more money". This was to a certain extent a deliberate policy on the part of the Soviet government: "We reduce the price even of goods of which there is still a shortage, if these goods are important for mass consumption," said Mikoyan in October 1953. "It must be said that this created an additional demand which stimulates us to increase more quickly the production of goods in short supply needed by the people."

This existing situation of goods shortages, taken together with the slowing-up of the rate of expansion of the consumer goods industries this year, meant that it proved impossible to carry out the usual annual price-cuts in April. It was also decided to call for a doubling of annual subscriptions to the State Loan ⁽⁶⁾ to help cut down excess purchasing power, and stricter control is being maintained over wage increases.

III

THE developments of 1955 naturally give rise to the question: Why did the Soviet government decide to increase defence spending by restricting the growth-rate of consumer goods, rather than by cutting-back on heavy industry?

⁵ On this point, see the *Economic Survey for Europe in 1954*, published by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 1955, p. 70: "The re-adjustment of the investment programme towards higher outlays in sectors producing consumer goods seems to have been offset by reductions in investments in the defence sector."

⁶ Workers earning up to 700 roubles per month were asked to contribute a maximum of three weeks' wages between May 1955, and March 1956, and those earning 700-2,000 roubles a maximum of four weeks' wages. Only those earning more than 2,000 roubles per month were permitted to subscribe more than these maxima.

The considerations lying behind this decision have been set out in the course of a far-reaching controversy on policy towards heavy and light industry which has been taking place among Soviet economists in the past two years. In this controversy, two main views have been expressed. Some have argued that in this new stage of Soviet industrial development, with industrialisation completed, the output of consumer goods should be permitted to increase as rapidly as or faster than that of heavy industry. Others consider that heavy industry must still expand more rapidly than the light and food industries.

It is not possible to go into the details here (⁷), but the most important points made by the second group, which has received the support of the leaders of the Soviet government, may be summarised briefly as follows.

Firstly, a more rapid expansion of heavy industry is essential if the USSR is to make technical progress and to raise labour productivity substantially. The Soviet planning system has made it possible for production to rise more rapidly than in any of the advanced industrial countries of the West; but output per head will reach United States levels only if priority is given to heavy industry, which will make possible mechanisation, automatisisation, and the wider industrial use of atomic energy. There are no short cuts to abundance, these Soviet economists argue, and the more the investment which can be made now in iron and steel, fuel and power, and engineering, the more rapid will be the ultimate rise in the standard of living.

In this connection, a Long-Term Planning Committee has recently been established; its functions include compiling ten- or fifteen-year plans for different branches of industry, showing the dates at which the advanced capitalist countries will be overtaken in output per head in the particular industry.

Secondly, it is argued that the Soviet Union has an international duty to help Eastern Europe and China to industrialise, and this will involve large exports of machinery.

Thirdly, heavy industry must expand rapidly if the Soviet defence potential is to rise. (According to an American observer, the steel used on armaments and on building armaments plants in the United States amounted to some 45 million tons in 1952 (⁸); total Soviet steel output in 1954 was 40 million tons.) "Without a powerful economic base in our heavy industry, we should not have achieved victory [in the second world war] over our enemy, who was armed to the teeth," stated Bulganin.

Fourthly, a powerful heavy industry is stated to be necessary to supply agriculture with the machinery it needs for rapid expansion: the slowness of the rise in agricultural production has been a serious pre-occupation of the Soviet Union in the past two years. Khrushchov drew particular attention to the need for agricultural machinery in his report on the livestock programme, pointing out that many more tractors and combine harvesters were needed if this programme was to be achieved (⁹).

Summing up these views, the resolution of the January Plenum of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party stated that "the Communist Party considers, as before, that its main task is the further development of heavy industry, which is the stable basis of the whole economy, source of its continuous growth and of the welfare of the Soviet people . . . On the basis of the continuous growth of heavy industry, the light, food and other branches of industry develop, as does our large-scale agriculture."

⁷ For a more detailed treatment of the controversy, see forthcoming number of the SCR Social Sciences Bulletin.

⁸ T. S. Lovering, *Bull. Geological Society of America*, Vol. 64, pp. 101-125, February 1953.

⁹ See *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL*, Spring 1955, Vol. XVI, No. 1.

The following table gives some measure of the progress of Soviet heavy industry over 40 years. The last column shows the targets set by Stalin in 1946, for achievement in "another three five-year plans, if not more" in order to secure the Soviet Union "against all contingencies". A comparison with the previous columns shows that these targets are within sight of realisation (in the case of oil, the target has already been exceeded).

	1913	1940	1955 (5-year plan)	1955 (Annual plan)	Stalin's targets
Coal	29	166	372	391	500
Oil (m. tons)	9.2	31	70	66	60
Pig-iron (m. tons)	4.2	15	34	33	50
Electricity (milliard kwh.)	2	48	163	163	[250]

IV

THE decision to concentrate on heavy industry carries with it its own problems. Can incentives to the peasantry to produce more be made sufficiently effective without a very substantial increase in the supply of industrial consumer goods to the villages? Can productivity be raised in industry as much as is required without a continued increase in the standard of living as rapid as has been achieved in the past four years? "A leap in the growth of abundance", Strumlin points out, "in itself involves a corresponding growth in the productivity of labour."

These are undoubtedly real issues facing the Soviet economy. But it would be a mistake to conclude from the recent measures and discussions that the standard of living of the Soviet citizen will not continue to rise considerably during the next few years. It is only the *rate of growth* that is under discussion. The leading Soviet economist Ostrovityanov (in *Pravda*, March 27, 1955), while emphasising that "Soviet public opinion has decisively criticised the anti-Marxist views of certain economists who have denied the *law* of the prior development of heavy industry", himself strongly opposed those "who have rushed to the other extreme" and have begun to hush up the decisions of the party and the government on extending the production of consumer goods, on the sharp development of agriculture, and on the further development of the light and food industries to the extent that the raw materials produced by agriculture are increased.

The new livestock programme, which aims at doubling the output of meat, milk, wool and eggs by 1960, together with the plans for increasing the output of other agricultural raw materials used in producing consumer goods, forms the central core of the Soviet government's immediate programme for raising the standard of living. "The achievement of this programme", Malenkov stated, "will create the conditions necessary for a real upswing in the production of all the consumer goods which are required." At the same time, an easing of international tension, and an agreement between the great powers to reduce defence spending, could enable resources to be freed in the USSR to accelerate the rise in the standard of living. In bringing about international understanding, improved cultural relations (such as the exchange of agricultural delegations between the USA and the USSR, which itself arose out of the Soviet livestock programme) can play an important part.

Main sources for statistics used above

Annual Plan results and Budget statements: *Pravda*, 6.10.52, 26.10.53, 27.4.54, 29.12.54, 2.2.55, 9.2.55, 10.2.55, 19.5.55; *Gudok*, 12.5.55; *Planovoye khozyaistvo*, No. 2, 1955 (P. Ivanov); *Bulletins on Soviet Economic Development*, No. 8, 1952, University of Birmingham.

SOVIET BOOKS AND THEIR WRITERS

I

Printing, Publishing and Bookselling in the U S S R

OVER 500 delegates from the publishing world and the printing industry met at a nation-wide conference in Moscow between February 14 and 19, 1955, to discuss how they could improve every aspect of work in book publishing and book production. Writers, illustrators, editors, translators, typographers, print workers, wood pulp and chemical works delegates, representatives of the book trade, Ministers of Education and of Culture from the Union Republics—all had something to say on the shortcomings and potentialities of this vast and rapidly growing industry. The conference lasted six days. Three days of reports, by the heads of the different departments of the USSR Ministry of Culture concerned with book production and distribution, were interspersed with contributions from the delegates themselves. The tone both of the reports and of the contributions was practical, frank, critical and lively. Many of the practical suggestions made were summed up by the then USSR Minister of Culture, G. A. Alexandrov,* at the end of the conference. During the second three days of the conference, problems were studied by commissions, which made possible even more thorough discussion of certain aspects.

The commissions were assigned as follows.

1. Organisation of editorial work in publishing houses.
2. Planning book-publishing in different branches of science and *belles lettres*.
3. Typography, layout, design, new technological processes.
4. Printing presses, new machinery and equipment, the redesigning of existing machinery.
5. Problems of supply to the printing industry.

The conference as a whole had two main questions before it: the need to increase book output very considerably in the immediate future; and problems of quality in editing and in personal training, and of utilising the considerable quantity of new machinery, equipment and processing methods now becoming available.

New print works have been or are being erected in Saratov, Chelyabinsk, Kalinin, Yaroslavl, Minsk and Rostov-on-Don, and the new Kiev colour printing works is the first of several such.

Many contributions to the discussion emphasised that the greatly increased availability of paper for printing, and of actual printing space, was not being properly used. Too many books in *belles lettres* and in the natural sciences were over-long, thus using up extra stocks of paper which should have been used for larger impressions of important works and for reprints of now out-of-print classics.

Lack of planning among publishing houses was criticised, particularly with regard to specialised political and agricultural literature in pamphlet form.

* Succeeded since the Conference by N. Mikhailov.

An over-large impression of a pamphlet on one of these subjects wasted valuable paper, showed a lack of over-all planning, and indicated also that publishing houses ignored comments from booksellers, who knew only too well which books and pamphlets were collecting dust on their shelves.

It was felt that many inadequacies in the content of many of the books and pamphlets published were primarily the responsibility of the editors and publishers' readers concerned in the various stages of the work. A plea was made for more and better practical and academic training for young people coming into publishing on the editorial side. Better training would give them greater authority in discussing draft MSS submitted for publication, but unsuited as they stood, with the authors. A high level of educational attainment and of practical knowledge would bring to an end the pernicious practice, prevalent in some publishing houses, of editors setting up as part-authors with powers of rewriting rather than *editing*. (Other comments on content and presentation appear in the digest of the report by the Minister of Culture which appears below.)

Many contributors spoke on problems of layout and typography in book publishing. Shortcomings in the training of printers and layout staff were discussed; A. I. Nazarov, USSR Deputy Minister of Culture, said that much closer links were needed between editorial technicians responsible for the body of a book, and layout men and art editors, who all too often designed covers, illustrations and title pages without due attention to, or even knowledge of, the type face used. Nazarov also said that the extremely dull and unimaginative textbook publishing was not a mere oversight on the part of the Ministries of Education, or the result of shortage of paper or of the necessary technical equipment, but was also the fault of teachers and lecturers. The very people who had to teach from some of these dreary products never complained about them.

Other main speakers and delegates, both at the plenary session and in the commissions, dealt with many technical points concerning printing machinery, paper processing and standards, type founts and so on. It was urged that students working in higher technical printing schools should have more equipment for practical studies at their disposal concurrently with their theoretical training.

Sovetskaya Kultura published a number of discussion articles prior to this all-Union conference, and reported the plenary sessions at some length.

Extracts from opening statement by G. A. Alexandrov

BOOK publishing in the Soviet Union is carried out on a vast scale. During the period, covering nearly four centuries, from the beginnings of printing in Russia down to 1917, 550,000 titles were published, while in the Soviet period 1,210,000 titles, with a total of seventeen thousand million copies, have been issued. The number of books published in 1954 was eleven times the 1913 figure.

The increase in the public demand for books far exceeds current publication figures, nevertheless. Data gathered by publishing houses and bookselling organisations, with the assistance of library and school staffs, indicate that to satisfy the basic public demand for books the publishing houses would have to produce as many as 2.5 thousand million copies a year; that is, increase the publication figures two and a half times.

The working people must know the laws of social development. Editions of the classics of Marxism-Leninism total over one thousand million copies. The State Publishing House of Political Literature has increased publication of political works, including textbooks on economics, philosophy and history, as well as numerous pamphlets. The production of social and political litera-

ture, however, still suffers from many shortcomings as regards both quantity and quality. The number of books published on political economy, dialectical and historical materialism, and current questions of foreign and domestic policy, is insufficient.

At the same time, some books and pamphlets published by the State Publishing House of Political Literature and other publishing houses lack any penetrating Marxist-Leninist analysis of important political problems, and substitute for it mere dogmatism and quotations, so that the content, unenriched by the experience of socialist construction, remains completely divorced from reality. Many books and pamphlets are written in a meagre, unimaginative style; editing kills the originality of an author's style, with the result that all the authors seem monotonously alike.

In his report at the January Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Khrushchov spoke of two typical defects in the content of political propaganda work: the tendency to speak only of achievements and to avoid discussion when shortcomings and difficulties are mentioned; and the tendency to dwell on the privileges granted to collective farmers, for instance, and avoid such subjects as the strengthening of labour discipline and the increased demands made on each individual worker. Since speakers and propagandists make use of the books and pamphlets issued by the publishing houses, it is on the latter that the responsibility rests in the main.

The increased part played by technical equipment in the national economy is accompanied by a rise in the cultural and technical standards of the workers, and by a strengthening of the links between science and production. Millions of new people now being drawn into industry need guidance and help in improving their qualifications. The older and more experienced workers also need to increase their technical knowledge. The publication of technical and industrial literature has a great part to play in this. Books on various branches of industry and agriculture have accounted for over 36 per cent of all publications, and 17.3 per cent of the total number of copies, in recent years. In 1954, 165 million such books were issued, compared with 59 million in 1940.

There is a marked deficiency in the publication of books describing the experience of leading workers. In 1952 over 1,000 books and pamphlets of this kind appeared, but in 1953 the number fell to 869, the total number of copies printed decreasing by 20 per cent; and in 1954 the figures declined further still. This indicates that the publishing houses are neglecting this field of work.

Since the war, 42,000 books on agriculture have been published, with a total print of 500 million copies. This does not mean, however, that all is well here. Too often there is no demand for the books issued. Many such books and pamphlets consist of commonplace, unconvincing propaganda and mere bragging. There has been some recent improvement in the publication of books on agriculture, but a great deal still remains to be done.

It is high time special small library editions were issued for people in various professions: agronomists, engineers, tractor drivers, team foremen, agriculturists, stock breeders. We already have separate multi-volume editions of the classic writers on agricultural science. Publication of a *Classics of Agricultural Science* library series should now be started, in order to make what is most important and best in this science available to our leading personnel.

It is well known that in the Soviet Union both young and old are studying. We have succeeded in satisfying the basic demands of primary and secondary schools. The problem now is not so much to increase the number of copies of

textbooks printed, as to improve their quality, to create "stable" textbooks and to move gradually from allocating them solely through schools to general sales.

Since 1917 a great deal has been done as regards publishing scientific literature. Academy of Sciences publishing has increased thirty times over. Such publications, however, should not be confined to achievements within the Soviet Union, and all central publishing houses should systematically publish foreign scientific and technical works within their purview.

Fiction publication has sharply increased in recent years. Nearly 220 million copies of works of fiction appeared in 1954, five times as many as in 1940.

Some publishing houses embark on multi-volume editions without advance planning, and spread publication over a good many years.

A general rule should be adopted for thorough preparatory work to be done before any publication of the complete works of an author begins, and once such publication has been started the publishers should issue at least four volumes a year; where a complete edition does not exceed three or four volumes, publication should be completed within a year.

Investigations show that publishing 122 million copies of works of fiction (not including children's books) satisfies only one person in four or five who wish to buy books or to subscribe to an author's works. The number of titles published must be greatly increased, so that the Soviet reader becomes familiar with the treasures of world literature. The publication of selected works (in two or three volumes) of classic Russian writers, of Soviet writers of various nationalities, and of foreign authors, should be increased.

Our publishing houses devote much of their work to literature for children and young people. In 1954 the total number of copies of children's books published was fifteen times the 1913 figure. Children's books are published in more than fifty languages. Nevertheless, there is still a shortage.

Foreign fiction is popular and is published in large quantities. Between 1918 and 1954, 1,675 books by foreign authors were published, in 300 million copies. In 1954 alone the print of foreign authors totalled 32 million copies.

The data quoted show that there are now many more books in the Soviet Union, and yet it is often impossible, or very difficult, to buy the works of some particular author, because the impressions are too small.

Directors of all publishing houses should now draw up a careful five-year publication plan (1955-60), and discuss it with the reading public and in the Ministries. This will make it possible to prepare a unified national publishing plan.

The Central Publishing House of the USSR Ministry of Culture has hitherto underestimated the importance of planning a year or more ahead, and its work has suffered accordingly.

The systematic publication of complete editions of the works of scientists and other writers, the issue of encyclopedias and basic reference books, and of series and library editions, can be properly thought out and executed only by means of long-term planning. Such planning would end the spasmodic activity and disorganisation caused by inadequate preparatory work.

Too many unnecessary and unwanted books and pamphlets are published only to clutter up the storehouses, and at the same time the importance of bringing out new improved editions of books with established reputations is inadequately recognised.

Long-standing practice in many countries shows the considerable part played by reprints in the total number of books issued. In Great Britain, for instance, out of the 18,000 titles issued in 1953, 5,000 were reprints. In the USA in

the same year, reprints were 2,000 out of 12,000. In both countries, of course, priority is given to the most profitable books for reprinting. In the Soviet Union the approach is different, but unfortunately a systematic plan for reprints is still lacking.

Many books in great demand are overlooked by the publishing house. Thus the works of Granovsky, Stankevich and Chaadayev have become rarities ; it is impossible to buy the works of Lunacharsky, Vorovsky, Stepanov-Skvortsov and many other outstanding revolutionaries, essayists and historians of art and literature.

For all the importance of reprints, however, the first task of publishers is to bring out original new works which enrich science, practical knowledge and general culture, and add to the people's spiritual treasury. It is therefore essential for every publishing house to select authors of future books properly and to organise work with them.

Many of our publishing houses have valuable experience in this respect. The State Technical Literature Publishing House, for instance, is wise and skilful in its choice of authors for textbooks and popular scientific literature. Many of their books have run into many editions and have a deservedly high reputation. Not all publishing houses, unfortunately, are sufficiently careful in this respect. The publisher's role is obviously not confined to entrusting an author with the writing of a book. What often decides the fate of the book, its success or failure, is the editor's subsequent work with the author.

There are at least four points for the editor to bear in mind in dealing with a manuscript.

1. Is the subject a well-chosen and necessary one?
2. Has the author dealt with it properly and in sufficient detail?
3. Is the MS ready for publication as regards literary form?
4. Does the author's method of exposition suit the character of the publication (depending, for instance, on whether the work is a theoretical one or a popularisation)?

All these points are of great importance, and yet all too often presentation is considered of secondary importance, with unfortunate results when the subject itself is highly topical.

Our popular scientific and mass literature teems with hackneyed words and expressions taken from bureaucratic "officialese". They accustom the reader to dull generalities and empty formulations and destroy his interest in works of popular science. The welter of hackneyed and empty phrases and expressions in our mass literature is a grave evil. There are still many editors who recast the texts of books and pamphlets, not because the MSS are erroneous or incomplete, but merely because the author's individual manner of exposition is not to their taste. No wonder many books and pamphlets by various authors, recast by various editors, monotonously resemble one another in manner and style!

It is also a frequent occurrence for editors to make unwarranted concessions to authors, and to send rough and insufficiently prepared MSS to press in order to please them.

Experience shows that the weaker the MS is, the more the author insists. If the editors give businesslike and intelligent advice to the authors, and help them to clarify the subject and improve the content, the writers readily accept friendly collaboration with the editors and make improvements in their work.

Many editors disregard an author's individual manner of exposition and seek to impose uniformity of language and style on all MSS. Sometimes the amount of recasting makes it difficult to say how much of an MS is the author's and how much the editor's. Directors of publishing houses and members of

editorial staffs should remember that the MS is the creation of the author, who is wholly responsible for the exposition, style and language. It is for the publishers to judge whether the subject has been properly treated, and to reject inadequate works ; but for the rest it is for the author to shoulder the responsibility. If the work is below standard, the publishers are not entitled to improve it, but should return it to the author for revision ; if he demurs, it should be rejected.

Many readers rightly complain of the lack of indexes, bibliographies, chronological tables, and so on. Foreign editions of learned works are very seldom to be found without these. Many of our publishing houses are oddly unaware of this very important aspect of publishing work. Statistics show that only 20 per cent of the learned works published in the USSR in 1954, and only 42 out of 100 books published by the USSR Academy of Sciences, have indexes, while out of 27 books issued by the State Publishing House of Political Literature only one has an index. Strangely enough, the Foreign Literature Publishing House deletes the indexes when publishing Russian translations of books by foreign authors.

Another question worthy of attention is that of the size of books and pamphlets. The average size has greatly increased lately. The usual reason for this is that editors have not been helping authors to compress and to cut out the padding. This is not just a technical question, but a political one also, for it plays an important part in cultural development. In fact, the indifference of publishing houses as regards the size of books and pamphlets is one of the reasons why book issues are not keeping pace with demand.

Only two years ago, fewer books were published than in the early 1930s: in 1930 the total number of copies was 859.1 million ; in 1952 it was 851 million, that is 8.1 million fewer. Yet the output potential of the printing industry, for books and pamphlets alone, increased between 1930 and 1952 from three to 7.2 thousand million printer's sheets,* that is it more than doubled. The consumption of paper by publishing houses increased in approximately the same proportion. This rise in paper consumption and printing capacity has been absorbed by the increase in the size of books and pamphlets. While the number of copies remained more or less stable, the average size increased from 3.5 printer's sheets in 1930 to 8.5 in 1952.

This unwarranted increase in size is in fact reducing the capacity of our publishing houses. If in 1954 publishers had reduced the average size of books and pamphlets by one single printer's sheet, 120 million additional copies could have been printed. And if the average size of books and pamphlets had been maintained at the 1940 figure (6.2 printer's sheets), the public would have received over 500 million additional copies in 1954, that is nearly 50 per cent of the year's total output.

Another problem is that of improving the economic organisation of the publishing business as a whole. Ways must be found of running Regional publishing houses on a more profitable basis. One way would be to merge them, to set up inter-zonal publishing houses to cover several Regions on an economic and geographical basis.

In view of the continuing acute shortage of books, we cannot tolerate mistakes in deciding the size of editions. This decision is sometimes made without reference to demand. In 1953, for instance, from several publishing houses there appeared nine pamphlets on the basic economic law of contemporary capitalism, all of practically the same content and standard and each in an edition of nearly 1.5 million copies. It is not difficult to understand why most of these pamphlets have remained unsold.

In order to estimate the size of a projected edition correctly, one should

* Equivalent to 16 pages royal 8vo (10in. x 6½in.).

have data on stocks remaining unsold ; the practice of annual stocktaking in all sales branches and storehouses should be resumed. The size of editions should be fixed on the basis of orders coming from bookshops, not according to a subject-plan agreed with the book distribution centre.

The State does much to make it possible for the working public to buy the books it needs in every part of the country, however isolated. In the last six years alone, 3,656 new bookshops and 1,620 bookstalls have been opened. At the beginning of 1954, the Ministry of Culture had 6,006 bookshops and 2,820 bookstalls. Books are also purchasable at the shops of the Co-operative, Military, Transport and other publishing houses, as well as in those of the Academy of Sciences Publishing House, the Union of Soviet Writers' Book Store, and so on.

In 1953 the Soviet public spent nearly two thousand million roubles on books. Much still remains to be done, however, in organising book sales. Bookselling organisations do not study public demand sufficiently, and make serious distribution mistakes. This applies particularly to sales in rural areas, which are inadequately supplied. The CWS and its local branches confine their activity to Regional centres in the main, and tend to neglect direct sales in the villages. The choice of books for rural areas is often made without taking specific local interests into account.

We publishers must voice our criticism of the way the CWS sells books, and must call on co-operative workers to do everything possible to make the sale of books an important function of the CWS trade organisations.

Soyuspechat is also guilty of neglecting the book trade in the countryside, and does not make sufficient use of existing dispatch agencies or of the large army of rural postmen.

Books help people to live, to work and to take history forward. Gorky described books as the greatest and most complex miracle of all those performed by the human race on its path towards future happiness and power.



THE Minister of Culture summed up some of the factual proposals made in the reports and discussions both at the plenary session and in the commissions, as follows.

1. There should be much more careful unification of over-all planning, to prevent duplication, and a unified publication plan, in all branches, for a period of at least five years ahead.

2. Much greater practical attention should be paid to bringing writers and editors together to exchange experience and seek and give advice, and means of doing so should be found.

3. A printing, typography and layout journal, dealing in particular with the theory of this art and providing a forum for exchange of experience, should be established.

4. Methods of work in the book trade, especially on the distribution side, should be thoroughly revised.

5. The suggestion made at the recent Writers' Congress* of setting up a special faculty, attached to the Gorky Literature Institute, with professorships in special subjects, for training translators of *belles lettres*, was endorsed.

Abstracted from SOVETSKAYA KULTURA, various dates December 1954—January 1955, and more particularly February 10-20, 1955, by Eleanor Fox.

* See *SCR Writers' Bulletin*, Vol. II, No. 1 and No. 2 (together 3s. 3d. post free), for substantial extracts from speeches of Ehrenburg, Marshak, Simonov, Surkov (all in Part 1), Agapov, Fadeyev, Leonov, Ovechkin and Sholokov (all in Part 2).

Writers speak for themselves

THE Second All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers, which met in Moscow, December 15-26, 1954, was attended by 720 delegates. The Congress had been preceded by a year of growing discussion in the literary and general press, and by writers' and readers' conferences in every part of the Soviet Union.

Every problem that has faced Soviet writers in the last twenty years came in for its fair share of discussion by writers and readers alike, both in the press and in pre-Congress discussions in writers' organisations. Particular attention was devoted to the problems of the last ten years.

Although no real periodisation has yet been attempted by Soviet literary historians, there is some point in separating the past ten years from the preceding period, as marking a new stage in the historical development of Soviet literature. The war years produced much lyric and war poetry, some brilliant reportage and sketches, and a number of major novels, written in the white heat of the first impact of events on the young authors concerned. This work made a profound impression on the minds and hearts of Soviet people, an impression not eradicated by the subsequent period of reconstruction and development.

The fuller, richer possibilities opening to Soviet people in post-war years, greater leisure time and the many changes in social and personal life, both now and for the near future, caused Soviet readers to turn to their writers in expectation of assessments and responses with a high standard of literary craftsmanship in their writing about what was new. In many ways the writers found it hard to strike a balance between craftsmanship and content, and many misunderstood the purpose and the means of showing the new features of life developing in struggle against outworn and harmful ideas, or else proved inadequate for lack of talent or lack of contact with everyday reality.

In the pre-Congress discussions no facet of Soviet literary life failed to come under the microscope to be analysed for organisational or theoretical shortcomings and successes. The frankness and intensity of feeling so often manifested in these preliminary discussions were repeated at the Congress itself.

The prepared reports and the contributions to discussion were published daily in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (which normally appears only three times a week) in a form abridged by the speakers themselves. This made it possible to cover reports and contributions from more than a hundred speakers, most of the space being given to the discussion.

Much ground having been covered in the pre-Congress discussions and conferences, the Congress itself was as it were a public summing-up of both the achievements and the shortcomings in Soviet literature, and there was very little generalised theorising on many of the problems raised earlier by readers and writers alike, particularly in the press: the typical in literature, the positive and negative hero, the "theory" of absence of conflict in Soviet society, the difficulties of seeing the new and the heroic in the mundane and the everyday.

The promising young men of twenty years ago, when Gorky and Alexei Tolstoy were alive, have since become and still are the leading figures in Soviet literary life today. They do not feel in any sense old; but the age-breakdown of the delegates gave something of an impression that the young men of today were still feeling their way in literature and were only just beginning to emerge from many of the doubts and hesitations that beset them in the immediate post-war period. Writers were reminded time and again how important it is for the writer to have his ear to the ground and to have

sufficient experience of life to be able to sift the permanent from the passing and the profound from the superficial. Many of these difficulties beset writers of any age and time, but they are particularly apparent in the Soviet Union, where so much in life is changing and developing so continually that the arts in general, and literature in particular, always tend to lag behind reality.

In selecting extracts for publication here, much that was of interest has had to be omitted; but the selection has been governed by the principle that nothing is more irritating to readers than a lengthy analysis of matter which they cannot check for themselves if they wish to study the matter further. For this reason the following are omitted (although listed): the co-reports by Boris Polevoy on children's literature, little of which is known or available in translation in Britain; by Samed Vurgun on Soviet poetry, virtually unknown here; by Alexander Korneichuk on drama, only known here by a certain number of classics and not with any thoroughness, again owing to the absence of translations. Boris Rurikov* discussed literary criticism, and Maxim Rylsky (and others) translations into Russian from the literature of the non-Russian peoples of the USSR, but for the above reasons no extracts from their co-reports are given. Nikolai Tikhonov's report on contemporary progressive literature abroad listed a very large number of writers in all countries. We hope to publish extracts from Sergei Gerasimov's co-report on script-writing in the *SCR Film Bulletin*; although script-writing is an aspect of literature and is described by all Soviet film-makers as the Cinderella of Soviet literature, it does not really come within the scope of this survey.

All extracts from the reports and the subsequent discussions are given in the order in which they occurred at the Congress. Factual data showing the growth of publishing, the increase in non-Russian literature, and the composition of the Congress, are available in the *SCR Writers' Bulletin*.



ALEXEI SURKOV, opening the Congress with a three-hour comprehensive survey of Soviet literature since 1934, said that the Union of Soviet Writers numbered 3,695 members as against 1,500 in 1934. This increase in membership reflected a growth in the number of writers, an expansion of publishing, and a much greater exchange between the literatures of the peoples of the USSR in the form of translations into Russian from the other Soviet languages and from Russian into these languages. He emphasised that though much of value had been done in this field a great deal remained to be done in raising the level of translation, and he drew attention to certain shortcomings.

Translation, however, is sometimes undertaken by poorly qualified people who work by rule of thumb and are not capable of ensuring the necessary artistic level. . . . Therefore, while speaking with justifiable pride of the scale of our translation work and of the thousands of translated books published in millions of copies, we must never forget that many among these thousands are spoilt by a low level of translation. This Congress must give urgent instructions to the Board of the Union to tackle this question of translation and to see it as a vital cultural and political task. They must try to increase the number of translators as speedily as possible and to bring in skilled and talented word-specialists. The first step is to do away with the thoroughly perverse practice of working to line-by-line translations in drama and fiction.

Surkov devoted part of his report to the world importance of Soviet literature, giving figures on the publication of Soviet literature abroad, and stressing the need for a two-way exchange of experience between Soviet and foreign writers.

We must never forget the special place our literature holds today among the other literatures of the world. It lends greater vividness, love of life, and energy to the

* See *It Isn't True to Life*, *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL*, Vol. XIII, No. 4.

working people's struggles abroad. It is a source of creative experience to leading progressive writers abroad. From our acquaintance with the work of such writers, we believe their work to be developing within the framework of the great realist tradition. Moreover, their most powerful and socially most mature work contains elements of the new, elements such as distinguished the pre-revolutionary Gorky from the great realists of the past. Soviet literature takes a great interest in the creative experience of the writers of People's China and the new democracies, and of the leading progressive writers in capitalist countries. Their experience helps us in our seeking after a high level of craftsmanship.

Surkov emphasised the importance of the war, particularly in poetry, and said that in those dark days Soviet literature had very plainly shown its bond with the people, its humanism and its understanding.

Experience has shown that a book moves from the general stream of literature into the "closed circle" of favourites solely and only on its merits, its content and artistry, and not because of any "supervisory" action by the Union of Soviet Writers or any propagandist efforts on the part of critics. . . . Since the First Congress, we have seen the completion of such outstanding works as Gorky's *Life of Klim Samgin*, Sholokhov's *Quiet Flows the Don*, Alexei Tolstoy's *Road To Calvary* and *Peter The First*, Panferov's *Brusski* [all of these are available in English translation] and Book 2 of Fadeyev's *Last of the Udegei* (unfortunately still uncompleted).

Surkov then analysed the development of the creative faculties and understanding of several Soviet writers, many of whom had travelled by tortuous and difficult ways in search of the method best suited to their individual creative talents; among others he mentioned Alexei Tolstoy, Konstantin Fedin, Leonid Leonov, Valentin Katayev, Ilya Ehrenburg, Mikola Bazhan, Maxim Rylsky and Pavlo Tychina.

He remarked that novels about the creators of society's material wealth were still all too rare, and that the work of Pavel Bazhov, *The Malachite Casket* [in *Folk Tales from the Urals*, available in English translation] had never yet been surpassed in its power of conveying the poetry and glory of labour, although Bazhov wrote of Urals workers in the days of serfdom.

Surkov said that he considered Vsevolod Kochetov's *The Zhurbins* [available in English translation] among the best of post-war books. In dealing with a shipyard worker's family, Kochetov had succeeded in making his characters three-dimensional.

If the writer tries to show man's activity one-sidedly, without unfolding life's purposes and showing personality in all its aspects, he is bound to fail. . . . The failure of those very experienced writers Ilya Ehrenburg (in *The Thaw* [available in English translation]) and Vera Panova (in *The Year's Span*) was not due to their concentrating on the shady side of life. They have an indefeasible right to do so. The trouble is that they took their stand on the shaky ground of abstract "soul-searching". They replaced the laws of development of personality in social man by their own arbitrarily subjective ideas of Soviet man as having a personal life sharply marked off from his social life and work.

Surkov considered that the pre-Congress discussion in the Soviet literary press on the positive hero had gone to pieces because those who took part in it had not analysed the existing wealth of material.

Nobody will deny that such books as Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel was Tempered* [*The Making of a Hero*], A. Fadeyev's *Young Guard*, Boris Polevoi's *The Story of a Real Man* and A. Gaidar's *Timur and his Comrades* [all available in English translation] have played and still play an enormous part in forming the character of our young people. What brought these undoubtedly "positive" heroes so close to the hearts of young people? Was it that they were "ideal" in every way? On the contrary. In these books (and this is the secret of their lasting popularity) the heroes do not live through the trials that face them simply or unthinkingly. Their final triumph is not achieved without great difficulty.

Surkov criticised the character of Sergei Tutarinov in *Light over the Earth* by Semyon Babayevsky (the sequel to *Cavalier of the Gold Star*) as being an “idealised” superman. He felt that Babayevsky, having drawn Tutarinov really well in *Cavalier of the Gold Star*, had endowed him with such incredible traits in *Light over the Earth* that instead of being a good example of a quite typical post-war young man, he was a man *above* the community and aroused the reader’s incredulity. This was a wrong concept, a bad approach.

Finally, Surkov discussed problems of the literary analysis and historical surveying of contemporary literature, standards of strict—but not carping—criticism, and the urgent need for literary historians, critics and writers themselves to face the demands made by the Soviet reader, who expected both a high standard of craftsmanship and interesting content in the great possible variety of genres.

Surkov remarked in conclusion that the average age of the members of the Writers’ Union was much higher than it had been in 1934, although many new figures had entered Soviet literature, and urged that more attention should be given to bringing young writers, from the under-thirties, into literature.

KONSTANTIN SIMONOV, in his co-report on *Problems of the Development of Soviet Fiction*, said:

The aesthetics of Socialist realism do not demand any softening in the portrayal of life where it is grim or even merciless. They do, however, demand that the aim behind the action and the necessity for the sacrifice be clear and that the coming victory be seen beyond the temporary defeat. It is equally out of keeping for socialist realism, with its clear attitude to life and its evaluation of human actions on the plane of the interests of the people, to be tempted to look at reality through rose-tinted glasses. This is as bad as taking pleasure in darkness and suffering. . . .

There were assertions at the First Congress of Soviet Writers that the socialist realist method determined style and that, in fact, the method was the style. If one is convinced by this vulgarised view it is easy enough to grow besotted with it and even go to the length of working out the “only correct” composition, or the “only acceptable” subject-matter. Replace the concept of socialist realist method by the concept of style, and it at once becomes impossible to speak of *variety* of style within socialist realism. . . .

Let us examine this levelling-down viewpoint by taking some of the war novels as examples. We shall see that some critics thought Boris Gorbатов’s *The Family of Taras* was too journalistic, V. Nekrasov’s *In the Trenches of Stalingrad* too prosaic, Alexander Bek’s *Volokolamsk Highway* too business-like [these three are all available in English translation], and O. Gonchar’s *Standard Bearers* too elevated. . . . In point of fact these books were merely written in the different styles characteristic of these four different artists. . . .

Simonov continued his report with an analysis of shortcomings in Vera Panova’s *The Year’s Span* and Ilya Ehrenburg’s *The Thaw**

The question of objectivism is a difficult one. In discussing it, we must clearly define its origins and its drawbacks. At the same time, we should not tolerate the stereotyped attitude which has led some critics to call any work objectivist if the writer has felt it inartistic to point at the picture (already clear enough) and say explicitly *This is black and that is white*. . . .

Simonov went on to make severe strictures on “retrospective” publicity.

The transposing to earlier periods of later-developed concepts has frequently had a very bad effect on our literature. On the one hand, valuable work which truthfully described its own epoch in the history of Soviet society (including work by authors now dead) has been neglected and not re-published, and has even remained unmen-

* The discussion between Simonov and Ehrenburg on this appeared *in extenso* in *SCR Writers’ Bulletin*, Vol. I, Nos. 3/4, November 1954, price 3s. 3d., post free.

tioned in articles and literary reviews. On the other hand, a good deal of work by living authors containing real shortcomings which had passed unnoticed when the books were written but have become apparent today has been revised for re-publication not by way of correcting genuine mistakes or artistic flaws, but by adjusting the past to fit the present; and it has naturally lost in the process. And finally, one-volume and multi-volume editions of the collected works of our contemporaries have often been published with unjustifiably restricted contents, giving no real idea of the writer's path of development or of much valuable work done by him. . . . Not only is it right to try to improve earlier work and remove its shortcomings, it is a writer's duty to do so. To provide informative prefaces and sensible commentaries to work by dead authors, where needed, is not only right, it is an obligation on publishing houses. But all this has nothing to do with attempts to "improve" the history of literature, to ignore what is contradictory in it, and to wipe off the register with an intrepid hand any work not free from some shortcoming or other. . . .

Simonov further discussed the recent work of F. Panferov and Semyon Babayevsky, and the positive hero in literature and the public.

Our people are not children. Our literature is not a governess, to take the children out for walks along nicely gravelled paths only. A Soviet upbringing does not cradle people, it tempers them. The best books in Soviet literature are stories about real men and how the steel was tempered. The tempering of steel is a hardy affair for hardy people, not a twittering of governesses. It must be plainly stated that to gloss things over, to dodge complexities, to attach angelic wings to idealised heroes, debases literature and sharply conflicts with the interests of readers, of Soviet people and of our Soviet system. . . . In the centre of the literary picture of contemporary reality must be the people who stand at the hub of the life of our epoch, the people engaged in creative labour, the people who, while they are the rank and file, yet carry within themselves a heroic inspiration. To show these people *only at work* [Simonov's italic], however great the time and energy they may devote to that work, would mean showing them one-sidedly. Labour is the centre of their lives, but it is not the whole of life. Labour is the new content of their lives, but it is not the only content. They cannot imagine their lives without creative labour, but they have no wish to imagine life without love, friendship, motherhood, and all life's many joys and difficulties.

. . . Let us ask ourselves why the reader is so frequently obliged to seek descriptions of love which are rich and full, and not shamefaced or casual, in such books by Soviet authors as are written about the past, whether distant or recent? Why, in order to read and experience the full force of the drama of love, whether unrequited or reciprocated, does he have to turn to Fedin's *Early Joys* or *No Ordinary Summer*? [both available in English translation]. He will not find such stories as those of Lisa Meshkova or Anochka Parabukina in books about the present day. . . .

. . . Quite apart from the question of talent, why do we so rarely see even so much as an attempt to depict a great love that is difficult and even heroic, like that of Aksinia and Grigory in *And Quiet Flows the Don*?



ILYA EHRENBURG, speaking on literary criticism, said:

Criticism is a meeting of different opinions. In the last analysis, the reader decides, the reader of today and the reader of tomorrow. I welcome irreconcilable struggle against enemy ideology. But I think that criticism should be very circumspect. We know how often even great writers were mistaken in their evaluations. Goncharov called Turgenev a plagiarist, and Turgenev declared that Nekrasov's voice was doomed to speedy obscurity. Hugo considered Stendhal a boring and illiterate scribbler, while Stendhal found Hugo a dubious poetaster. But why delve into the distant past? Remember Mayakovsky: many of those who condemned him later came to praise him.

I have no particular wish to recall the criticism of my latest story, but silence on my part might be misinterpreted. I am far from suffering from self-delusion; I know that in *The Thaw*, as in other books of mine, there is much that is imperfect or merely unfinished. But my reasons for blaming myself differ completely from those of my critics. Should I find it in me to write a new book, I will try to make it a step forward and not a step to one side.

... Ill-wishers abroad accuse us now of fanaticism, now of a lack of creative individuality. They cannot or will not understand that for us Soviet policy is the path forward to the flowering of human values, the triumph of humanism, and that this is completely in line with the behests of our great predecessors, Pushkin, Tolstoy, Chekhov and Gorky, to defend man. On this we are all agreed, though we differ in our literary evaluations and on how we should write, and we choose different heroes. This is bound up with the writer's character, experience of life, and literary methods.

Arbitrary verdicts are particularly dangerous with regard to writers just beginning their work. One can only laugh wryly to think what would have happened to Mayakovsky, when just beginning, if in 1954 he had brought his first poetry to Vorovsky Street [the street in which the Writers' Union has its club and offices].

... The fate of literature is inextricably linked with that of the writer. I want to call on all writers to have a profound understanding of one another and a close comradely unity. One of the leaders of the Union of Writers, in making some sensible remarks about "average" writers, said there could be no cream without milk. This somewhat unfortunate comparison might be followed up by saying that without cows you wouldn't even get any milk.



SAMUEL MARSHAK, speaking on children's literature, said:

... The really educative book is not that in which the author clammers into a professorial chair in order to take advantage of the reader's youth and lecture him: it is that in which the author lives with the full force of his emotions in the reality he has created, rejoicing and suffering. Art is not philanthropy. We need no discounts on children's literature. We do not feed children on worse food than adults.

The bonds between writer and reader do not lie on the surface. One must delve deep into the reality of life to reach the spiritual depths of those for whom the book is being written. This applies to literature for adults and for children equally. Writer and reader have relationships of their own, like those between good friends and close comrades. And such relationships are possible only when the author is a real personality with a walk and a smile of his own, when in every new book the reader meets him as a man he has come to love.


Marshak went on to criticise the work of publishers' readers and editors and their ways of planning future books.

To the honour of our literature it must be said that more and more houses are appearing in "the street of the younger son", alive with living warmth. [Reference to a very popular Soviet children's book, *The Street of the Younger Son*, by L. Kassil and M. Polyanovsky.]

... Subject-matter can and must be planned, especially as regards the informative book. But this must be done in the Gorky manner, on a big scale, well thought out and full of ideas. Re-read Gorky's article *On Subject-Matter*. ... In art everything must be a discovery, a find. What you pick up ready-made or borrow from a neighbour cannot be the subject of art. Criticism should insist on this. But the critics are largely silent about children's literature, asserting that they are unacquainted with the specific characteristics of the genre.

... Our children's literature has grown so much and become so mature that it has nothing to fear from criticism, even sharp criticism. ... Here more than anywhere else, however, it is important to avoid sketchiness and superciliousness. We do not

need poetry that looks like little rhymed articles, or stories like production instructions. . . . Children's literature should not be left to children's writers alone. The greatest men of this century, Leo Tolstoy and Gorky, interested themselves in it. . . . People who work in the field of children's literature, at the very sources of human consciousness, are like the Soviet people who are ploughing up the virgin soil. It is an arduous but noble task. [The reference is to the Soviet campaign to open up, plough and sow 75 million acres of new land in Siberia and Kazakhstan by the end of 1956.]



V. OVECHKIN, speaking on the isolation of writers, said:

The young writers at present entering literature are either newspapermen who have travelled widely and seen much, or people who have some industrial profession. Of the older writers who were leading figures in our literature at the time of the First Congress, some have considered themselves old too soon, and have retired. In recent years this group of writers has given our literature less than it might. If we take another group, those midway between the older writers and the younger, we find that things are not all they should be with them either. There are precocious prizewinners who moved to Moscow after their first and only books. . . . They have occupied themselves with the organisation of their personal well-being, giving all the passion of their souls to this business. The result is a decade of silence, or else dreary and mediocre books. . . .


Wherever I have said that writers should scatter away from Moscow, I have been accused of suggesting asceticism, fanaticism and goodness knows what else. . . . But when I hear from some writer that he is frightened by the prospect of moving away somewhere out of Moscow, that he is afraid to think of how he would live somewhere in the country or in some small Donbas town or even in a Regional centre somewhere in the depths of Russia, I am simply staggered. When has it ever happened before in the history of our literature that a whole colony of writers has grown up, isolated from life, on the outskirts of Moscow or Petersburg? Yet nowadays almost all the foremost Moscow writers are huddled together at Peredelkino; and even in Moscow itself they all live in the same building in Lavrushkin Lane.

It may be objected that I am resolving the question of ties with life in a crude, rough-and-ready way by simply "evicting" writers from Moscow. Is Moscow a desert, after all? Moscow life is rich and full! It includes mills, factories, Metro builders, students. Yes, Moscow life too is interesting, tempestuous, variegated. Not at 52 Vorovsky Street, though; not in the writers' clubs; and not in conference halls.

Ovechkin then developed criticism of recent work by Simonov, saying that it fell far below what he was capable of. Ovechkin felt that the greatest disservice was done to Simonov by critics who, anxious not to "get across" such an important writer, consistently over-praised his work, and that this error had been condoned by Simonov. He called on Simonov to set matters right before his work suffered from the inadequacies of insufficient application, brought about by this over-praise. Ovechkin then went on to speak of the future.

I do not believe that our time will not give birth to its Gorkys, Chekhovs and Nekrasovs. But until they are born, let us all write better, to the full measure of our strength and abilities. We must write so as not to be ashamed to look our readers in the face, the readers who are the people engaged in constructive labour, the real creators and builders of life. Let us write in such a way that our literature becomes a truly mighty, moving force in our society.

[V. Ovechkin was a delegate from Kursk. He is the author of hard-hitting reportage on rural areas, some of which was published in *Soviet Literature*, No. 10, 1954.]



BORIS AGAPOV, in his contribution, set himself to reply to Ovechkin, mentioning a number of post-war books of sketches and reportage, ranging from scientific biography and popularisation like V. Safonov's *Land in Bloom*

(translated into fourteen languages, including English), through sketches of different parts of the Soviet Union, particularly N. Mikhailov's books, published in three million copies, to stories about contemporary people by Boris Polevoy, Y. Weber and others, and works on popular science and agriculture by Gennadi Fish and others.

The sketch* is an excellent weapon of criticism. The work of many writers in this genre, such as A. Kalinin, Y. Kapusto, E. Dorosh, V. Tendryakov and V. Ovechkin, has shown it. The whole country knows Ovechkin as an impassioned and talented fighter for the prosperity of our villages. For this reason I found his speech remarkably odd. An assertion, from this nation-wide platform, that a recognised writer's reputation is inflated, and his position a sham, needs confirming by something more substantial than a quotation furnished by a poor memory. . . . I would advise Ovechkin to look at *Novy Mir*, No. 3, 1953, p. 281, to satisfy himself that Simonov comes third for circulation, after Alexei Tolstoy and Mikhail Sholokhov, even though he was first published much later than they were. . . . It might be claimed that these figures are inflated too, and derive from the position Simonov holds. Then how is it to be explained that not a single copy of the publications in question is to be found in the shops? Perhaps Ovechkin assumes that Simonov has bought up all these books himself so as to create an impression of success? . . . As to Peredelkino, does this "question", if I may call it such, merit Congress discussion? In all periods writers have worked outside the big cities. . . . Pliny the younger, 1,850 years ago, complained that it was quite impossible to write in Rome, and used to leave the capital in order to do his writing.

[Boris Agapov is a journalist member of the Editorial Board of *Literaturnaya Gazeta*.]



MIKHAIL SHOLOKHOV, speaking on artistic and critical standards, said:

Have all the problems we have been worrying over for the last twenty years really been solved? Have we nothing left to do but to sum up achievements and mistakes over that period, and placidly take up our pens once we have duly noted the mistakes and unanimously approved the new Rules? Hardly.

I hesitate to disturb the classic calm which has reigned at the Congress, ruffled only by two or three speeches; all the same, let me say what I think about our literature and at least say a few words on what must concern us all.

Much has been said here about our general progress. Without any doubt, the achievements of multi-national Soviet literature in the last twenty years really have been great. Not a few talented writers have joined our ranks. Nevertheless, for the last few years we have been afflicted with a dreary spate of colourless commonplace writing flowing from the pages of our journals and flooding the book market. It is time the path of this murky flood was blocked and a sturdy dam erected by our common efforts, otherwise we shall run the risk of losing our readers' respect, which was won by years of considerable effort on the part of serious writers.

. . . I mean this for already well-known writers who have ceased to respect either their own work or their readers, who are withering on their stems and will ultimately turn from craftsmen into hacks.

Sholokhov then expressed the opinion that one of the most important factors in lowering writing standards had been the war period, when it was important to get impressions and feelings down on paper quickly. In the work of many writers, style had suffered a great blow from which it had never really recovered.

He felt, however, that this did not entirely explain stylistic carelessness. Writers, in his opinion, had quite unjustifiably ceased to make stern demands on themselves. Owing to the general lowering of standards, the majority of

* The word rendered here as "sketch" also does service for essay, reportage, and similar forms of *belles-lettres*.

literary critics had followed one of two policies. They had either blushed and turned away in silence from a bad work by a writer with a name, or else had indulged in syrupy eulogies, no matter how bad the work.

We cannot and must not have literary "settlements" and people with a right to immunity.

It may be objected that such [critical] articles have in fact been in existence but have not been published, for reasons beyond the critics' control. The fewer are the timid editors on the boards of newspapers and journals, people like Rurikov, for example [Editor-in-chief of *Literaturnaya Gazeta*], the greater will be the number of bold, high-principled and urgently needed articles appearing . . . *Literaturnaya Gazeta* needs as its leader a man who stands outside all groups and cliques, a man who has only one love—for a great Soviet literature as a whole, and not for any of its individual servitors, whether Simonov or Fadeyev, Ehrenburg or Sholokhov. . . . the term "leading" is in itself a good term, if applied to a man who really leads someone; but in life it sometimes happens that a writer who was leading is now leading no longer, but standing still. And he stands still not for a month or a year, but for a dozen years or so, or more; like yours truly, and others of his kind, for example.

You will understand, comrades, that it is not always very pleasant to say such things about oneself, but there must be self-criticism. Well, you see, that kind of writer shies away; like a ram at an unfamiliar gate, he just stands there. What sort of a leading person is he when he is nothing but a standing joke!

. . . Another reason for the decline in the value of works of imagination is the system of giving literary prizes which unfortunately still exists. . . . The sorting out of works of imagination into first, second and third class resembles commercial grading for the market. What about the work not included in the prize list? What designation are we to give to work which is not of the prize grade? What is it? A mass-consumption waste product? This whole business has become embarrassing, offensive and embittered. This system of encouragement is simply no good at all, especially when you take into account the fact that many good books—talented, intelligent books—do not get prizes; and they are sometimes more widely read than the ones that do.

As an example, here is what sometimes happens. An author has written a mediocre book. Being a sober judge of his own abilities, he has not been expecting a success. He feels his next book will be better. Then, out of the blue, he is awarded a second prize. Naturally his conscience will make him say, "No, really, don't give it a prize, it doesn't deserve it," don't you think? Don't make me laugh. No such lunatics have turned up. The writer accepts the prize, and pretty soon he begins to think he has been under-estimating himself, and then he starts thinking that the others, the prize committee, have too. Why shouldn't he have got a first prize, not a mere second?

Such methods of appraisal do harm both to writers and to readers. . . . We must make representations to the government about a radical overhaul of the system of awarding prizes for literature and art, for we cannot go on like this. With this system, if it is perpetuated, we shall ourselves forget how to distinguish gold from brass, and the bewildered reader will be wary of any book by a regular prize-winner. A high award given lightly or casually ceases to be a high award. . . . I have not yet mentioned Simonov. He is adept at turning out a play, a long poem, and a novel, all in a bunch, not to mention such trifles as verses, essays and so forth. He is a safe bet for three medals a year. . . . This is neither the place nor the time to analyse his individual works. I want to say something about his work as a whole. . . . What can young writers learn from him? How to write shorthand and improve their skill in skating diplomatically round things—a quality totally unnecessary to a writer? . . . His latest book is disturbing; on the surface everything is smooth, everything is in its place; but read it through to the end, and you feel like a hungry man invited to a banquet and fed on brose [*tyura*—a primitive food consisting of bread crumbled into *kvass* or salt water]—and not enough even of that. It makes

you cross and leaves you hungrier than ever, and inwardly you curse your host's stinginess. Simonov has been writing for many years. It is time he looked back along the literary path he has travelled, and thought of the coming hour when some clever lad with eyes to see will point at Comrade Simonov and say: "But the king has got no clothes on!"

Friendship compels me not to leave Ehrenburg out. I am not going to start another argument on artistic problems. God forbid! It is good to argue with people who defend themselves fiercely; but he takes offence at the slightest criticism, and says he doesn't feel like writing after being criticised. I would much rather Ehrenburg went on writing. . . . He is doing a big and a necessary job in taking an active part in our common struggle for peace. But it is not as a fighter for peace but as a writer that we criticise him, as is our right.

In his speech Ehrenburg said: "If I find it in me to write a new book, I will try to make it a step forward from my last, not a step to one side." Compared with *The Storm* and *The Ninth Wave*, *The Thaw* is unquestionably a step back. Now Ehrenburg promises to take a step forward. I don't know what such dance steps are called in other languages, but in Russian they are called "marking time". You have not promised us anything very consoling, my dear Ilya Grigoryevich.

We are sometimes exceedingly sharp in our relations with one another; we are sometimes impatient in our artistic appraisals; but this clearly comes not from bad temper, ambition or mercenary impulses, but from a single-minded desire to make our literature a still more powerful help to the Party in the communist education of the public, and to make it still more worthy of our great people and of our country's great literary past, of which we are the direct heirs. I most sincerely believe that by the Third Congress many of us will have produced fine new work. From the bottom of my heart I wish each of you fresh artistic successes and the vivid delight of the workman who has done his job really well.

The tone of Sholokhov's speech was unfavourably received by many delegates, particularly in the lobbies. So great was the disapproval that Fyodor Gladkov, one of the *doyens* of Soviet literature, felt impelled to come to the rostrum and speak critically of the tone used by Sholokhov.



ALEXANDER FADEYEV, objecting to the tendency towards carping criticism, said:

I have been working in Soviet literature for over thirty years, and, like many writers of my generation, I have often had to listen to similar complaints. Every time the country moves forward to a new and higher stage of development, and the irresistible pace of our life strongly shows up the fact that literature is not reflecting the people's great life broadly enough or fully enough, there are voices raised to say that literature is virtually "in decline". In reality, literature is developing and maturing, always reaching out into fresh spheres of life, and the number of writers capable of tackling complex artistic tasks is constantly on the increase.

Criticising the "conflictlessness" theory, he went on:

It is very naive of many of our writers to try to explain or condone their weaknesses by "the theory of the absence of conflict" [i.e. in Soviet society]. There may be writers who are too lazy to become really part of the Soviet people's life, in which the conflict between the new and the old rages in every field; in many cases writers do make the effort, but they lack a world outlook enabling them to see life's full scope, and they cannot understand events or the relationships between people: their vision of the path of development of the new and the advanced lacks clarity. Therefore they balk at castigating the survivals in people's minds of the old private-property world. Or else, and more frequently, they see it all, but they fail to find a form in which to express vital conflicts. And then a writer of this sort comes to the rostrum and says: "My writing is being frustrated by this wretched conflictlessness theory." But in point of fact, does this "theory" really exist? . . . How could the

best works in Soviet fiction, poetry and drama have been created at all if our best novelists, poets and playwrights had not understood that there is conflict underlying most work in varying literary genres, and had not expressed this in artistic form?

If in our publishing houses and institutions in charge of art and literature (including the Union of Writers) there have been and probably still are people whose backwardness and inertia have fostered and are still fostering a tendency to decorate reality and to hush up the contradictions and difficulties of growth, this is itself a manifestation of the struggle between the new and the old in literature as in all branches of life.

Fadeyev spoke at some length on the Soviet writer's responsibility in the face of hostile criticism of everything Soviet in some foreign circles, and stressed the responsibility borne by Soviet writers when speaking at such an important gathering as the Congress.

. . . I have listened attentively to the critical speeches of Ovechkin, Aligher, Bergoltz and Kaverin, and find much weight in their criticism. But I think their speeches would have gained greatly if they had also borne in mind some of the points I have mentioned. Also, I would say of Mikhail Sholokhov, the verbatim report of whose speech I have studied attentively, that he is one of our greatest writers; the people's love for him is boundless; his authority stands high; he himself could have done much to correct shortcomings in the development of all our literary work. It is regrettable that he should have stooped to personal attacks. . . . Many of the shortcomings and mistakes in the work of the Writers' Union are accounted for by the fact that the principle of collective leadership has not always been honoured in the last twenty years. At times, too much power has been concentrated in the hands of leading individuals. Writers are anxious for real collective leadership to be ensured; we want a fairly broad Praesidium, with full powers of decision between plenary meetings of the Board; and we want the Secretariat to be subject to the Board and the Praesidium.

Dealing with methods of criticism, Fadeyev went on:

It was our press, in the first instance, which permitted the over-emphatic criticism of Grossmann's mistakes in *Za pravoye delo*. In a sector of public opinion, and within the Writers' Union, this created such an atmosphere around the novel that those of us who had let these mistakes slide were forced into the position of shouldering a measure of blame that was quite disproportionate to Grossmann's mistakes or to ours. . . . I regret the fact that after endorsing those criticisms that were justified I weakly failed to rebut the over-emphatic criticisms, and called this novel ideologically harmful. I have done something to correct this error. . . . I helped Grossmann in his work on the novel and saw it through to publication, with the basic mistakes by and large corrected.

We writers want the Union and its new leadership to cure some of us of our "infantile disorder" of cliquishness. Those of us who have long held leading positions in the Union must accept some responsibility for the recent failure to keep this "infantile disorder" sufficiently under control. . . . most of those afflicted with this ailment are in fact honest Soviet writers . . . it is their duty to do some serious thinking about this and to form honest conclusions founded on principle.



In all, more than 140 speakers (not including those presenting reports) were heard by the Congress. *Literaturnaya Gazeta* published the text of nearly seventy of the speeches (in the speakers' own abridgments), devoting almost its entire space to the contributions and the discussion throughout the period of the Congress sessions. Speeches made by foreign writers who were guests at the Congress were also published. (Of the British writers who had been invited, only Jack Lindsay was able to attend.)

Changes in the rules of the Union

LEONID LEONOV introduced the changes in the Rules of the Union of Soviet Writers, explaining the reasons for them. The changes proposed and adopted may be summed up as follows.

1. Membership of the Union of Soviet Writers is now open to film writers and professional translators.
2. The candidate-membership stage of admission to the Union is abolished; full membership may be applied for after publication of one book.
3. The existing membership cards and candidate-membership cards are to be exchanged in 1955 for unified Soviet Writers' Union membership cards.
4. The Board of the Union of Writers shall elect a Praesidium and Secretariat from its members. No election of a chairman of the Board is envisaged, in order to ensure better collective leadership.
5. Branches of the Union of Writers of the USSR are to be organised in the Regions and Territories of Union Republics provided there are not less than ten members of the Union in the Region or Territory concerned.

This decision has been brought about by the comparatively small membership of the Union in some areas, which encourages the dispersal of existing forces. From the strong Rostov organisation could be formed a North Caucasus branch, to include the existing Krasnodar and Stavropol branches and writers from Grozny. The Sverdlovsk branch could act as a centre for the whole of the Urals, and the Chelyabinsk, Molotov and Chkalov branches, with the writers in Kurgan, could be united into this single organisation. The Saratov branch could similarly become a centre for the Volga area, including the existing Kuibyshev branch and writers in Ulyanovsk and Astrakhan. Voronezh could serve as a centre for writers in Tambov, Ryazan, Orel and Kursk. Thus each of these branches, by bringing thirty or forty writers together, could become a strong literary organisation.

For complete lists of the composition of the new Board, Praesidium, Audit Commission and Secretariat of the Union of Soviet Writers, and for facts and figures on twenty years of Soviet publishing 1934-54, see "SCR Writers' Bulletin," Vol. II, No. 2. For facts and figures on the composition of the Congress, see ditto No. 1.

New Literary Journals

As a result of discussions before and during the Congress, the following new literary journals are to start publication in the course of 1955:

Yunost (Youth)

Editor: V. KATAYEV. *Deputy Editor:* A. MARIAMOV. *Editorial Board:* V. GORYAYEV, S. MARSHAK, G. MEDYNSKY, N. NOSOV, M. PRILEZHAYEVA, V. ROZOV.

Monthly, in 100,000 copies. First issue scheduled for April.

Inostrannaya literatura (Foreign Literature)

Editor: A. CHAKOVSKY. *Editorial Board:* I. ANISIMOV, M. APLETIN, M. AUEZZOV, I. EHRENBURG, S. GERASIMOV, T. MOTYLEVA, L. NIKULIN, S. OBRAZTSOV, S. SHCHIPACHEV. Monthly, in 40,000 copies. First issue scheduled for August.

This journal is to publish Russian translations of foreign writing in all genres, and is to include a foreign and Soviet literary criticism and review section.

Neva

Editor: A. CHERNENKO. *Deputy Editors:* V. KOCHETOV, M. SMIRNOV, *Editorial Board:* E. GREEN, S. KARA, B. MEILAKH, S. ORLOV, M. SLONIMSKY.

Monthly, in 50,000 copies. First issue appeared in April (available in SCR Library).

This is a second literary journal for Leningrad. It is to include large sections on cinema, drama, music and the visual arts.

***Druzhba narodov* (Friendship of the Peoples)**

Editor: V. GOLTSEV. *Deputy Editor:* G. KORABELNIKOV. *Editorial Board:* P. ANTOKOLSKY, N. BAZHAN, P. BROVKA, R. GAMZATOV, F. GLADKOV, K. KORSAKAS, G. KOMIDZE, P. SKOSYREV, M. TURSUN-ZADE, S. VURGUN, S. YEVGENEV, N. ZARYAN, A. ZUYEV.

Monthly, in 50,000 copies. Publication date not yet scheduled.

This journal replaces the bi-monthly, or occasional, almanac of the same title. It is to deal with work by non-Russian Soviet writers, and is to include translations and critical material.

*Abridged and arranged from LITERATURNAYA
GAZETA and PRAVDA, various issues,
December 1954, by Eleanor Fox.*

SCR PROVINCIAL SECRETARIES

Readers of THE ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL may wish to get in touch with the Secretary of the local SCR Committee so that they may be kept informed of local SCR activities. The following list is appended for their convenience.

BIRMINGHAM: Mr. Michael Robinson, 266 Kingsbury Road, Erdington, Birmingham 24.

BRADFORD: Mr. G. R. Ashton, B.A., 170 Swinnow Road, Pudsey, nr. Leeds.

BRISTOL: Mr. Scott Simpson, 7 Henleaze Park Drive, Bristol.

CAMBRIDGE: Miss S. Pascal, Girton College.

LEEDS: Mr. A. Dressler, Russian Department, The University, Leeds 2.

LIVERPOOL: Mr. E. Dawson, 20 Brompton Avenue, Sefton Park, Liverpool 17.

MANCHESTER: Mr. R. Barstow, 20 Cartwright Street, Audenshaw, Manchester.

NEWCASTLE: Mr. J. Bossanyi, 16 Alexandra Terrace, Whitley Bay.

NOTTINGHAM: Mr. J. Daniels, 16 Greendale Gardens, Astley Park Drive, Nottingham.

SOUTHAMPTON: Mr. A. L. Merson, 109 Ethelbert Avenue, Southampton.

YORK: Mr. W. Coleman, 80 Monkgate, York.

SWANSEA: Mrs. Farrington, 4 Bethany Lane, Westcross, Mumbles, Swansea.

CULTURE AND THE ARTS IN SOVIET FACTORIES

1

A Trade Union Library

G. Natra

*Chief Librarian, Council of Trade Unions Central Library
Republic of Latvia*

WE librarians regard it as our duty and our primary responsibility to bring books to the ordinary reader, to advise him in his choice of reading matter, and to help manual and clerical workers to master the principles of Marxism-Leninism and to acquire knowledge in various branches of science, technology, literature and the arts.

A book information service is most successful when it is not sporadic but is systematically maintained day by day. The library uses tried and tested forms of visual propaganda and public campaigns of various kinds to acquaint readers with the best books and with recent publications.

The commonest and most effective form of visual propaganda is the book exhibition. These are generally organised in connection with important national events, economic and political campaigns or historic anniversaries, to bring the appropriate books and publications to the notice of readers. We have held exhibitions to help our readers to familiarise themselves with the Marxist-Leninist classics and with material on the Nineteenth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, the fifth five-year plan and government and party decisions regarding the achievement of a sharp increase in agricultural productivity and the output of consumer goods.

Book exhibitions are a valuable means of informing the public about Russian and world classics and notable works by Soviet writers. In the last twelve months alone we have held exhibitions on the life and work of Pushkin, Lermontov, Belinsky, Tolstoy, Shevchenko, Chekhov, Gorky, Rainis, Kupala, Mayakovsky, Makarenko and Andersen-Nexö. We have also had exhibitions of the works of the famous scientists Sechenov, Mendeleev, Michurin and others. During the recent Writers' Congress we held exhibitions on various aspects of Soviet literature and on the work of individual authors in non-Russian Soviet Republics.

Active trade unionists find the library very useful. Books, pamphlets, articles and illustrations showing the activities of Soviet trade unionists in every sphere of the national economy, and in meeting the material and cultural needs of the public, are displayed on a well-arranged stand. There is also a showcase entitled *Aid To Active Trade Unionists*, containing material on the work of the trade unions. The permanent exhibition, *What The Active Trade Unionist Should Read*, is regularly brought up to date and extended.

All this helps the library to bring the book and the reader closer together and to direct the reader's attention to the book most valuable to him in all branches of knowledge.

Talks, reports and lectures are given, and readers' conferences and literary evenings held, on the work of individual novelists, poets and playwrights, on the most important problems in the development of Soviet literature and on

the inculcation of communist morality and the communist attitude towards labour.

The library staff, with voluntary assistants, arrange talks with readers on current publications. Writers, literary historians and members of the Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge are invited to lecture. For each lecture, an exhibition of suggested reading matter is prepared in advance, with an illustrative poster where possible. It is noticeable that after each lecture the demand for reading matter on the given subject increases considerably.

The library arranges fortnightly or monthly readers' conferences for the collective discussion of books read and in order to publicise the best work in literature and science. Preparations for such a conference begin six weeks in advance. We choose a speaker and suggest subjects for the readers to take up in discussion, supplying them with the necessary literature and drawing their attention to reviews. The library staff arrange an exhibition for the conference, make posters, display newspaper cuttings, and collect readers' opinions on the books to be discussed.

Much help in the preparation of such conferences is received from the trade union libraries at various institutions and factories. Through them we inform the public of the coming conference and see that readers know of the appropriate books in advance. Active trade unionists, Red Corner committee members, organisers of cultural activities, all arrange for the selected books to be read aloud in their groups.

All this helps to make the conferences interesting and animated. Readers are eager to exchange views on the books they have read. Conferences on such books as *The Young Guard* (Fadeyev), *How the Steel Was Tempered* (Ostrovsky), *The Pereyasavl Rada* (Rybak) and *The Zhurbins* (Kochetov) made a particularly deep impression on readers.

We hold regular literary evenings on the Russian classics and on works by Soviet writers. One of the most interesting of these evenings was that celebrating the fiftieth birthday of the Latvian writer Vilis Latsis,* who is a Stalin prize-winner and whose books are extremely popular. The writer E. Ratner read a paper on the life and work of Latsis, which was followed by contributions from readers. To conclude, actors from the Riga theatres read passages from the works of Latsis.

Some readers' conferences and literary evenings are held on the spot at factories, offices and technical schools. A literary evening on Kochetov's *The Zhurbins*, for instance, was held at a Riga electrical equipment factory, where we also had a readers' conference on *The Broad Current* (Andreyev). A highly successful literary evening on the life and work of Lermontov was held at No. 10 Technical School.

This kind of work does much to help the steady growth in library readership. In 1951 there were 4,175 readers; today there are over 8,000 using the library regularly.

Another and no less important result of our work is the reader's own development. His choice grows more discriminating day by day, and he develops a systematic approach to reading. There is increasing interest in the Marxist-Leninist classics and in books on the experience of leading workers and the achievements of Soviet science and engineering. When E. Yeroshan, a worker from the Cosmos factory, first started using the library, for example, he was interested only in light literature. Now his reader's card shows works by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Russian and foreign writers and Soviet authors. The same is true of another reader, Hugo Muizsnieks, a riveter at the Riga waggon works. There are many such examples.

* Author of *The Fisherman's Son* (available in English translation).

Day-to-day work with readers and a systematic book information service yield rich results. It is our duty to work even more energetically and persistently to bring good books to the broader public and meet their growing cultural demands better and more thoroughly.

From SOVETSKIYE PROFSOYUZY, No. 2, 1955.

II

Meeting the Community's Demands

A. Limonov

*Trade-Union Group Cultural Organiser. Ribbon Shop, No. 1 Factory,
"Red Perekop" Textile Combine, Yaroslavl*

I AM new to cultural work. This job was entrusted to me at a meeting of trade unionists early last December. I am new to it, but it interests me and I want to justify the confidence shown in me by the community.

On the advice of the shop committee, who explained the aims and tasks of cultural work in trade union groups, and the system of organisation of such work, I began by talking things over thoroughly with my fellow workers in the shop to find out what they wanted. I did this so as to have as full an idea as possible of the demands of the community when I prepared my working plan. I found that many workers, especially the young people, were particularly interested in the history of our town, its past and its revolutionary traditions, as well as its industrial achievements in Soviet times. So I suggested an organised visit to the local history museum. This first visit was a success; twenty people, almost the whole of our trade union group, took part in it.

Then there was a general wish among the members of the group that we should organise communal visits to the cinema and the theatre to see new films and plays. After each of these visits we shared our impressions at a get-together. The play *Port Arthur*, which shows our people's heroic past, made a particularly strong impression on us.

At the general wish of the workers, we and a group of active trade unionists asked the works trade union committee to arrange a popular lecture on the peaceful use of atomic energy. The committee readily agreed, and the lecture was organised for all the factory workers. It was listened to with great attention.

It was right for the works committee to meet our wishes so rapidly. It is very important to support the initiative of active trade unionists.

Cultural workers in trade union groups, in turn, can do much to help the works committee with the organised introduction of measures for the factory as a whole. On January 25, for instance, we had an evening devoted to an exchange of experiences on the job by the best workers. Among the speakers was a woman worker from our group. Before the meeting, with the union group organiser and the foreman, we helped her to draw general conclusions from her experience and to express herself in such a way that the audience would be able to understand what the "secrets" of her output successes were. We also made sure that the workers who were still lagging behind should attend this gathering, as well as the best workers.

Our shop often has visits from doctors, who give talks and lectures on hygiene and on ways of reducing the sickness rate. I find out the subject of the lectures in advance, and inform all the members of our group, trying to interest them and ensure their attendance.

Class teachers from the school attended by the children of our workers also

visit our shop, and talk on the children's work and what the parents, in co-operation with the school, should do to bring the children up properly. The parents are attentive listeners to the teachers' advice, and conversations on children's upbringing often start up in the dinner break.

Such discussions are particularly animated when we have readings of satirical sketches and articles attacking undesirable incidents in everyday life.

Newspaper reading is organised regularly, but this has proved insufficient in itself, and at the request of the workers I have begun to make reviews of the week's outstanding events. We call this spoken newspaper our *News of the Week*.

From SOVETSKIYE PROFZOYUZY, No. 3, 1955.

III

Notes from the Kharkov Electrical Engineering Works

The Palace of Culture

LEISURE evenings, and evenings devoted to given subjects, are a feature at our Palace of Culture. They all please the people very much.

We had an interesting evening on young people in the Kharkov theatre. It was an original kind of "activity report" by young actors to an audience of factory workers. The young artistes were introduced by Aristov, People's Artist of the Ukrainian Republic, and Voronov, producer at the Drama Theatre. The actors Tabarovsky and Deryagina acted scenes from *The Apple Bough*, and Tarasova did a short scene from Gogol's *Marriage*. Scenes from *The Warm Heart*, *How the Steel Was Tempered*, *The Government Inspector* and *Death of a Squadron* were also acted. Bykov, Grubnik, Chibisova and the other young actors were well received.

Our "Youth Wednesdays" have become very popular. Their subjects are very varied, ranging from a lecture on the work of the [nineteenth-century] poet Nekrasov to a meeting with Pokko and Semenov, the Old Bolsheviks who work in the factory, or evenings devoted to such subjects as *Our Own Factory Gives Us Education, Persistence and Industry in Work and Study*, *Our Labour Is for Our Beloved Country*.

At the evening on this last subject, for instance, the factory workers met people representative of various professions. Tereshchenko, candidate [roughly equivalent to M.A. or M.Sc.] in the physico-mathematical sciences; Petrosyan, Doctor of Technical Sciences; Lupandin, Kharkov's best milling-machine operator; and Bykov, an actor at the Shevchenko State Academy Theatre, and others, described their own work.

During their leisure hours in the Palace of Culture, the factory workers often meet people who work in the architecture administration, in the Chamber of Trade, and leading agricultural workers. They become familiar with plans for reconstructing their native city, with achievements in agro-technique and farm mechanisation.

Amateur dramatic and concert groups are very popular among the factory workers, and the factory in general is very proud of them. In 1953 these amateur groups gave more than 150 concerts for the workers, and a similar number was arranged for 1954.

The Lecture Room

L. Fradkin, Engineer

MY wife and I have become regular attenders at the lecture room in the Palace of Culture. We never miss a lecture that interests us, and we are interested in many things: engineering work, literature, the history of art, religion and science. Every day of life must add to our knowledge. One should not only make a thorough study of matters relating to one's own speciality, but go more deeply into other branches of knowledge too.

The town's most notable scholars give talks in our lecture room. Professor Barabashev, of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, is one of our most regular lecturers. We also hear lectures by Professor Bulanki, the biologist, Professor Nikitin, Professor Platonov and many other professors.

In the last year we have heard about the latest achievements in science and engineering, and about the life and work of great Russian writers of the past and of Soviet writers, composers and painters today. We have heard about the masterpieces of foreign literature and classical music, the works of Chinese writers and writers in the people's democracies, Indian works of art, and progressive writers in Britain, America, France and Australia. I do not know how others may feel about it, but we ourselves have benefited greatly from our lecture room.

There is just one suggestion I would like to make. The management of the Palace of Culture should arrange more series of lectures on key questions in international politics. This could and should be done.

The Young People

A. Ardoshchenko, Hostel Education Officer

THE men and women workers who live in our "Luch" and "Trekhorodok" hostels often go to the Palace of Culture, but they also have every opportunity in their own Red Corners of hearing lectures by scientists or of talking to notable production innovators or experienced factory workers.

At least one leisure evening a week is organised in the hostels. Recently we had a meeting with young men and women from the people's democracies studying at Soviet higher educational institutions. We often have discussions on books we have read and plays or films we have seen, and we also have question-and-answer evenings. Amateur dramatic and concert groups perform at Red Corner evenings, and actors come to visit us.

The management of the Palace of Culture gives us a great deal of help in organising this work. The work plan of the Palace of Culture includes meeting the young people's demands, and there has not been one case of such demands not being met.

Nevertheless, we have a bone to pick with the management. We have in our hostels quite a number of gifted young people. Amateur dramatic and concert groups could be formed from among them to give Red Corner performances. For this purpose, teachers should be chosen and delegated to work with the young people twice or three times a week as a minimum. The Palace of Culture, however, prefers to put on shows with its own performers. This is wrong.

Rural Clubs

S. Gorgul, Electrical Engineer

OUR factory has "adopted" eight collective farms and a machine and tractor station in the Lipetsk District of the Kharkov Region. The Palace of Culture

is under an obligation to help the clubs of which it is the patron in their cultural, political and educational work in the countryside.

Active members of the Palace of Culture made a number of visits to these collective farms and helped the members of the rural clubs to form amateur dramatic and concert groups, encourage talented people, arrange programmes for such groups, and organise educational and instructional work.

Some time later concerts and plays were put on as a try-out. The collective farmers attended eagerly.

We may say that the first steps have been successfully taken. We are sure the "adoptions" will prove very helpful and the rural clubs will arrange evenings just as interesting as those we have at the Palace of Culture.

"I Want To Know Everything"

G. Kremer, Fitter

I REMEMBER the cultural organiser of our trade union group bringing to the factory some handsome invitation cards for the inaugural publication, a year ago, of the first issue of the spoken newspaper *I Want To Know Everything*, at the Palace of Culture. The card said that the aim of the spoken newspaper would be to bring to the workers' attention the most outstanding events in science, engineering, literature, the arts, international politics, industrial experience, physical culture and sport.

We decided to attend the ceremony, and have since become regular members of the spoken newspaper audience. Every issue is interesting and attractive in its own way, and from each one we learn something we did not know before.

I remember very well the issue on the tercentenary of the union of the Ukraine with Russia. We heard a talk on the historical importance of the event, and then Mironenko, the painter, described his work on the set of etchings *The Ukraine in Bloom*. An exhibition of Mironenko's work was on show in the entrance hall. Haydamaka, the composer, played a song cycle on the event, and Sukovskaya, an actress from the State Drama Theatre, read an adaptation from Rybak's novel *The Pereyaslavl Rada*. To wind up, scenes from Dankevich's opera *Bogdan Khmelnitsky* were sung by artists from the Lysenko Academy Theatre of Opera and Ballet.

For the tenth issue we had the film *Singing Ukraine*, in which members of our amateur club appear. One "page" was on the Ukrainian Soviet writer Y. Galan, one of whose essays was read by the actor Tabarovsky. Komarov gave us a lecture on the heroic city of Sevastopol, and then we saw a new play, produced by the Regional Drama Theatre.

Each issue has very varied contents. The Board of the Palace of Culture are plainly doing their utmost to make the spoken newspaper both entertaining and definitely educational.

From TRUD, January 9, 1955 (abridged).

IV

At an Armenian Factory

E. Zhukova

JUST outside Erevan, off the main road, there is a tyre factory. Beside its elder brother, the Kirov Works, whose tall buildings stretch for miles, it looks tiny and insignificant. This is understandable enough, for the Erevan Tyre

Factory was once merely a shop in the Kirov Works, and then a branch of the works. It began its independent existence only a year or two ago.

Its output has gone up considerably in the last few years. These production successes would not have been possible without creative development and increased activity among the people themselves. Many who started their working life in this factory have now become foremen, skilled workers, shift or section or shop managers. Most of the young workers studied, or are studying, at evening classes at the technical school, or are doing Institute correspondence courses.

A brief call on the factory committee is enough to show one what close ties it has with the workers and what a lot of active members are available for its work. All the news is brought here, and everything good or bad that the workers feel strongly about is discussed. Just now one of the shop-committee managers has come to arrange for a production meeting, and the public controller* is demanding a discussion of the work of the canteen at the next factory committee meeting. Most of the talk and discussion, however, is about the work of the cultural sub-committee of the factory committee, and I should like to deal with this in more detail.

The Erevan Tyre Factory has no club, and the Red Corner organised by the factory administration is not large. People have been found, nevertheless, to develop interesting activities successfully.

The factory had a few books, which were not being used. Nina Khachatryan, a draughtswoman, was given the task of organising a library. She assembled all the books, arranged them on shelves, and catalogued them. Presently a notice appeared on the library door: *Books may be borrowed and exchanged during the dinner break.* The number of readers mounted rapidly, from three to twenty-seven, sixty-four, 115, 200.

While choosing books, the workers discussed what they had read and exchanged opinions. Six months later Nina Khachatryan asked for the Red Corner to be put at her disposal for one evening. A readers' conference on G. Sevunts's book *Teheran* was held. In time such conferences became more and more frequent, and now one day a month is reserved in the Red Corner plan for workers to discuss books and meet authors.

The cultural committee had no sooner begun to develop its activities than dozens of suggestions came pouring in and many new activities had to be organised. Requests were received for visits to the Ovanes Tumanyan Museum, the Museum of Graphic Art, the opera and philharmonic concerts.

"Before we knew where we were," says the chairman of the factory committee, Sakoyan "every day off was filled up; it was either a museum or a theatre, or the planetarium, or a visit to our adopted machine and tractor station, or a trip to the country. And children's matinees on top of it all."

Bagdasyan, who is a worker in the assembly preparation shop, had not expected his suggestion of children's matinees to meet with such widespread response and support from his fellow workers. He is now in charge of children's work, and he and his helpers organise parent-teacher meetings, children's visits to museums, puppet shows, performances by the children themselves, and lectures for parents.

Dozens of people in the factory see social work not as an additional burden but as a necessary and pleasing job from which they derive great satisfaction. So nobody is surprised when storekeeper Kurgina comes to the factory committee room in the evening and settles down unobtrusively in a quiet corner to mend costumes for the members of the amateur dramatic group, while Nina Ulihanian, staff departmental instructor, does not go home till she has made

* See *Supervising Canteens and Retail Trade; Public Controllers at Work*, ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL, Vol. XIV, No. 3.

the rounds of every shop to distribute notices about a proposed excursion or a Sunday matinee for the children.

The lectures, concerts, leisure evenings, group visits to Erevan theatres, are all graphically set out in the cultural sub-committee's plan of work, and this is reflected also in the factory committee's estimates. The amount spent on cultural activities of all kinds was 500 roubles in 1951, 9,217 roubles in 1952, and 26,576 roubles in 1953. Last year new costumes for the singers and the dancers, and a piano, were bought out of the Director's Fund.*

The cultural sub-committee of the tyre factory's trade union committee has a large and increasing number of active and energetic helpers. It has close links with the shop organisations and knows their needs and demands, and it takes up fresh suggestions promptly; this is of special importance in this work, and makes for success.

From TRUD, March 15, 1955 (abridged).

V

Engineering Workers and the Moscow Arts Theatre

THE brass band plays stirring music. The auditorium of the Moscow Arts Theatre Annexe gradually fills with spectators. They have been delegated from the Red Proletarian engineering works to attend the celebration for the fifth anniversary of friendly co-operation between the two bodies and the signature of a new agreement for 1955.

The platform party included leading actors from the theatre—Yelanskaya, Yershov, Gribov, Stepanova, Bogolubov, Bolduman—and outstanding people from the factory—assistant director Chuyan, senior craftsman Belov, milling-machine operators and innovators Kuzmin, Yushina, and others.

The association between the factory and the theatre is founded on comradesly help to one another. During the last five years the theatre and the factory have had more than 400 lectures, concerts, discussions on plays, excursions, joint socials, sports contests. Members of the theatrical company help the factory's amateur dramatic groups, while factory workers help with mechanisation and labour-saving devices in the theatre, and with making equipment for complicated stage effects.

The lives of the two communities have a good deal in common with each other. Dozens of the factory workers have left to help reclaim the fallow and virgin lands: and the theatre has already sent one concert group to tour the new lands, and is sending two more in 1955.

At the anniversary celebration, the chairman of the factory committee said: "Our friendly association is reflected in the heightened interest of the 'Red Proletarians' in art and literature, and in the actors' eagerness to acquire the soundest possible knowledge of the life of industrial workers and collective farmers, in order to portray Soviet people faithfully on the stage."

Yershov, Gribov and skilled worker Saxonov also spoke, and Saxonov read a poem he had written on the friendship between the theatre and the factory.

A new agreement for socialist friendship in 1955 was made. The "Red Proletarian" community pledged itself to complete the five-year plan by October, 1955; to raise labour productivity 5.5 per cent above the 1954 level; to start production of fourteen new models of highly productive machine-tools; to fulfil all the demands of agriculture ahead of time; and to give all

* See *Overplan Profits in a Soviet Factory*, ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL, Vol. XII, No. 4.

possible help to the Mozhaisk Machine and Tractor Station, of which the factory is the patron.

The theatre community pledged itself to prepare and produce three new plays ; to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the 1905 Revolution by a revival of *Enemies* and a stage version of Gorky's *In Memory of 1905* ; to send two companies to the new lands with a new play on a topical subject and a prepared concert programme ; and to give active help to the Lenin District of the Moscow Region, of which the theatre is the patron.

From SOVETSKAYA KULTURA, April 9, 1955.

CORRECTION : AUTHOR'S NOTE

Some inaccuracies crept into my article on the bicentenary of Moscow University in the last issue of this journal, written and prepared for press rather hurriedly. Herzen and Ogarev formed part of one student "circle", not two ; the other groups were those of Belinsky and Stankevich. Turgenev was at the University in the first half of the nineteenth century, not the second. Timiryazev should have been described as a consistent materialist who came very close to Marxism, rather than as a Marxist. Zelinsky died in 1953, not 1955. I am obliged to Dr. Nikiforov, of Moscow University, for pointing out these slips. In 1955, Dr. Nikiforov adds, the number of students at the University has gone up to 21,500, of whom 5,500 are extra-mural.

A.R.

TEACHING METHODS IN SOVIET SCHOOLS

Deana Levin

THE Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, attached to the Ministry of Education of each of the sixteen Soviet Republics, is the centre of educational research. The Academy of the RSFSR has nine research institutes, one of which is devoted to methods of teaching. Research into teaching methods is also part of the work of some of the other institutes, including the Institutes of Psychology, Theory and History of Education, Art Education and Physical Education.

The Institute of Methods works on each subject in the curriculum, and on all questions related to them. New syllabuses are worked out, new text-books produced and visual aids prepared. These are tried out in the network of schools attached to the Institute, which works with the teachers in these schools and also sends its staff to them. The reports on syllabuses, text-books and visual aids are then sent to the Ministry, which has appropriate committees to study them and approve them for use in the mass schools.

Lately thirty new text-books have been prepared by groups of teachers and research workers, and a number of these are already in use in Soviet schools.

The Institute has a separate Department of General Methods. Its main work concerns: 1. The pedagogical-scientific basis of the content of education in the Soviet Union; the basic theory of the curriculum and the principles underlying the syllabuses and text-books. 2. Working out the general theory of the methods of teaching in Soviet schools and the teaching process as applied to different subjects at different stages. 3. The theory of the upbringing of children, the formation of their outlooks, their character. 4. Methods of research in didactics. The study of the results of teaching methods in each subject.

The basis of the general method of teaching involves the following principles: 1. The conscious approach by the children to learning. In teaching, the teacher uses the knowledge of the children to take them on to new material. 2. The scientific correctness of the explanation to the pupils at different levels. Information must be based on contemporary science and technique. The older pupils can understand the development of modern science and technique. 3. The importance of the visual approach, the close connection between theory and practice. Practical work must involve the use of the theoretical knowledge acquired. 4. The durability of knowledge must be ensured. For example, an understanding of algebra depends on a correct knowledge of arithmetic. Useful and interesting forms of repetition and revision must be used, linked to the acquisition of new knowledge. 5. The importance of the age and stage of development of the pupils at each level must be taken into account. 6. The imparting of knowledge must be linked with the building up of a scientific outlook.

There are various forms of lesson, but the most usual is one in which (a) homework is checked; (b) new material is introduced, first in the form of an explanation by the teacher, then through independent work by the pupils from the text-book or in the laboratory or through practical work; (c) there is a check on how the new material has been understood; (d) homework is set.

There are variations on this form—former work can be checked first, homework can be checked in the middle of the lesson, or new material can be given at the beginning. The principle, however, remains the same.

In all subjects except mathematics and language the work is almost entirely oral. Children are expected always to give complete answers or to explain some theme fully and clearly. Development of clear expression and enunciation are very important. Too much written work overloads the child and leads to bad writing and spelling.

In answering questions the pupil is expected to use maps, charts or models. Every pupil should receive from three to six markings for his work every term.

The Institute of Methods has a staff of 130 research workers, many of whom stay for three years while they are preparing a post-graduate thesis. Also 400 teachers who are writing theses are linked with the Institute.

Every year the Institute receives material from thousands of teachers all over the republic on various aspects of teaching and there are conferences in Moscow where the best of these contributors read their papers. The best papers are published, and the others are kept in duplicated form in the Institute library for reference. The research members of the Institute staff do their field work in the schools and draw teachers in to help them. The Institute, under the Academy, produces monthly journals devoted to the teaching of every subject in the curriculum.

The Institute of Psychology has a department on the psychology of learning. The aim of the research is to investigate the inner content of the learning process, of the process of mastering knowledge gone through by the pupil and his mastery of the habits of thought involved. These researches are applied to different school subjects. The department is seeking to discover the methods by which the child is enabled to master scientific conceptions.

The workers in this Institute work in the schools either as teachers or with teachers, and also work with individual children and with small or large groups.

At the Institute of the Theory and History of Pedagogy the workers are interested in the importance of the child's activity in the learning process and of his activity as a member of a collective. The methods of the best teachers all over the Republic are studied, generalised and published.

As there is a single type of school for all children in the Soviet Union with a centralised system for deciding the curriculum, the text-books and the syllabuses, it is easy to draw more and more teachers into research work and to inform them of what is being done. Twice a year there are teachers' conferences for everyone, to review the work of the schools and to discuss how to improve the teaching process so that fewer and fewer pupils fail to pass from one class to another.

The teaching process depends not only on the teacher's mastery of his subject and of the art and science of pedagogy, but on the activity of the child as a member of a collective, a collective which is interested in the development of each of its members. Children help each other to master the material. They stay after school to help each other and teachers have times for consultation for those who want it. The syllabus is worked out in such a way that time is left at the end of the year for revision and the out-of-school activities are also planned to give the children practical work in connection with school subjects.

It is as a result of this kind of work that the school leaving age is being raised to seventeen and that all school children are able to go through a course which gives them an all-round academic and practical education.

Soviet Learned Journals

We publish below some brief outlines of the scope and purport of five of the leading academic periodicals of the USSR of recent date.

Voprosy Psikhologii (Problems of Psychology)

THIS is a new journal (first issue January-February 1955) and is the only journal entirely devoted to psychological research. Most of the first issue is devoted to printing the reports of the Soviet delegates at the Fourteenth International Psychological Congress at Montreal, June 1954. Apart from the papers on general psychological theory by Rubinstein, Kostyuk and Leontiev, the most impressive contribution is Sokolov's work on the orienting reflex in human subjects, where he discusses changes in the galvanic skin reflex, the vascular system and the motor activity of the subject produced by different varieties of stimuli. The report of the Montreal Congress is extremely interesting since it is an example of critical intelligence, illumined by a general scientific standpoint of Marxism and Pavlovianism, weighing up the methods and empirical contribution of Western psychology. In common with many non-Soviet psychologists, the Soviet delegates condemn certain tendencies and movements as anti-scientific, but the article stresses the positive aspects of Western psychology—for example, Penfield on the cortical process in epilepsy, Eysenck on conditioned reflex theory and hysteria, Piaget on the development of the idea of space in children, Hebb on behaviour, and many others, impressed the reporters of these sessions, although the notices given to these investigators are not uncritical.

The editorial outlines the tasks and the orientation of the new journal. It is based on Marxism and Pavlovianism and aims at developing the progressive line of militant materialism in psychology. Freedom of criticism, within these limits, is basic to the development of psychological science. Attention must be given to the practical tasks of Socialist construction—for example, questions of moral training, the problems of polytechnical education in the schools, increasing labour productivity, and so on.

There is a very strong editorial committee, including several names very well known in this country. The chief editor is Professor Smirnov. The available sources of information on Soviet psychology are few in number; material is very difficult to obtain because of the great demand for psychological publications in the USSR. The new journal therefore opens a series of windows from which it is easier to see Soviet psychology as a whole. Many things appear to be very strange and even vulnerable to criticism from the standpoint of Western psychology. But there is no doubt that there is a great deal of activity in the psychological field, based on an integrated scientific theory of the organism. The empirical research reported in this journal, all questions of Marxism aside, is at least as good as the best we can show in this country.

J.Mc.L.

Sovetskaya Meditsina (Soviet Medicine)

IN a brief outline it is difficult to give a comprehensive review of this medical journal, whose interest is enhanced by some therapeutic methods which are not used in this country, and it is possible only to catalogue its contents. In scope

it is similar to the *British Medical Journal* and the *Lancet*, or *La Presse Médicale*, but being a monthly periodical it contains more articles, and is published in book form.

In the April issue of this year (1955, No. 4) there are articles on the following subjects :

1. Betterment of results in radical pulmonary operations.
 2. Surgical treatment of acute cholecystitis.
 3. Treatment of panarititis and cellulitis with intravenous novocaine-penicillin (combined with incisions if necessary). This method requires the application of a tourniquet.
 4. Treatment of mastitis with penicillin.
 5. Plastic surgery in trauma of thoracic wall.
 6. Lead colic in the surgical emergency clinic.
 7. Combined surgical and radium treatment of mixed tumours of salivary glands.
 8. Intestinal invagination into the stomach through gastroenteroanastomosis.
 9. Gastro-colic fistulae.
 10. Recurring haemocytoblastic reaction and severe capillary toxicosis in chronic suppurative pulmonary affections.
 11. Evaluation of various forms of treatment of influenza ; one of the remedies is anti-influenza serum "Ecmolin" insufflated into the nostrils in powder form or administered as nasal drops: for treatment of complications it is injected intramuscularly as a combined antibiotic preparation "Ecmonovocillin."
 12. Physical culture in the combined treatment of circulatory insufficiency.
- Then follow articles in the section *Exchange of Experience*.
1. Metabolism of ascorbic acid in traumas.
 2. Treatment of burns with furacilin.
 3. Surgical treatment of elephantiasis of the lower limbs.
 4. Modification of Dacriocystorhinostomy.
 5. A method of extracting foreign bodies from the oesophagus in cases of two or three strictures.
 6. Diagnostic puncture of posterior fornix in ectopic pregnancy.
 7. Reinfusion of blood in ectopic pregnancy.

Finally there are items on questions of particular interest to rural doctors and articles on the organisation of health services and on the history of medicine.

V.F.

Sovetskaya Pedagogika (Soviet Pedagogy)

THIS is a monthly journal on education issued by the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, Moscow, in 50,000 copies. The editor is I. T. Ogorodnikov, with an editorial board of ten, including N. K. Goncharov. Issue No. 1 for 1955 begins with a general article on *The Most Important Tasks of Pedagogical Training*, which deals with the re-organisation of the teachers' training scheme and with the disappearance of the four-year course (15 to 19) and its replacement by an extended network of institutes providing a course of at least two years after full secondary education.

The section on the theory and practice of education includes articles on ways of stimulating pupils' interest during the course of revision ; on the training of first-year pupils in self-control and concentration ; and on school-children's practical work in agriculture on the collective farms.

The section on psychology consists of an article posing the problem of developing abilities and skills and includes an attempt to define the words "umenie" and "navyk."

The section on the history of education and pedagogics deals with Moscow

University ; firstly its role in promoting progressive thought in the second half of the eighteenth century ; secondly, the Pedagogical Society, attached to Moscow University during the period 1905-1907.

Teacher training is discussed in a joint article by four writers on the theory and practice of training science specialists in higher training colleges in teaching methods, in bridging the gulf between academic knowledge and classroom technique.

The journal invariably contains information on some aspect of education abroad; perhaps in Europe, both east and west, perhaps in America, perhaps in China. This number gives an account, well documented from official British and U.N. sources among others, on education in the British African colonies.

The criticism and bibliography section gives suggestions for reading which will widen children's polytechnical outlook and encourage a healthy respect for labour. Sometimes in this section a report is made on theses on educational topics submitted for higher degrees.

The final section provides a chronicle of events and news items and an exchange of opinion and experience on topics of interest to teachers and parents. In this issue we can read about the experimental work being done in the model schools attached to the training and research institutes, about friendly co-operation between a village school and a machine and tractor Station, and about a successful "Parents' University".

It should perhaps be mentioned that the journal has recently been under fire (particularly in a long article in *Uchitel'skaya Gazeta*, April 27, 1955) for the insufficiently high theoretical level of the articles in 1954, the failure to draw general deductions from accounts of practical work and educational experiments.

C.E.S.

Voprosy Istorii (Problems of History)

IN addition to a number of journals dealing with special periods or aspects of history, such as the *Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, *Sovetskaya Etnografia*, etc., and a journal specifically concerned with problems of history teaching at the school level, *Prepodavanie Istorii v Shkole* (The Teaching of History in Schools), the USSR has a general historical journal called *Voprosy Istorii* (Problems of History). This journal combines the main characteristics of the *English Historical Review* with some of those of *History*.

Voprosy Istorii is issued, in an edition of 50,000 copies, twelve times a year, by the Institute of History, which forms part of the USSR Academy of Sciences. The editor-in-chief is Anna Pankratova (widely known to English readers interested in history as the editor of a school text-book on the history of the USSR, which was translated some seven years ago), and the editorial board includes, among others, the archaeologist A. V. Artsikhovskiy, whose work in recent years at Novgorod has attracted much attention, the medievalist S. D. Skazkin, and the modern diplomatic historian A. S. Yerusalmitskiy.

Each issue contains about 190 pages. The usual contents are as follows. First, an unsigned leading article on some topic of wide interest ; in the latest number available, No. 4, 1955, the subject is *V. I. Lenin on the First Russian Revolution*, and it brings to the attention of historians working on the revolution of 1905 (the fiftieth anniversary of which is being commemorated this year by the publication of numerous special studies) the wealth of material in Lenin's writings relating to the causes, course and consequences of this event. This editorial is followed by a section headed *Articles*, containing five or six major articles on miscellaneous subjects ; among

those in the number under consideration are *Moscow University in the Revolution of 1905-07* (V. I. Bovykin and O. I. Latysheva), which gives an account, drawn from contemporary newspapers, archives of the University, the police, etc., of the participation of Moscow students in the First Russian Revolution; and *Handicraft Production in the Towns of North-Eastern Rus in the 14th and 15th Centuries* (A. M. Sakharov), in which both archaeological and chronicle sources are used and the writer suggests inter-relations between the economic developments he analyses and the political trends of the period.

Next comes a lively section entitled *Discussions and Opinions*, in which there are usually a number of controversies in progress. In the current number there are three. I. Y. Zlatkin follows up two previously published articles on *Patriarchal-feudal relations among nomadic peoples*, examining the question of peculiarities in the process of transition to feudalism among cattle-breeding peoples such as the Kazakhs and the Mongols. *The Periodisation of the History of Soviet Society* is a report of a discussion, prompted by an article in an earlier issue of the journal, which was held in the History of Soviet Society department of the Institute of History; summaries of contributions by some ten historians are included. A lengthy account is given of conferences of historians held in Leningrad and Moscow to consider the question of the "basic economic law" of feudalism, on which a number of articles have appeared in *Problems of History* in the last two years, since medievalists' minds were attracted to the subject by the remarks of Stalin in his last book on the "basic economic laws" of capitalism and socialism; an article summing up this discussion is promised for the next number of the journal.

Communications is the heading of a section of a dozen pages or so devoted to papers which as a rule are briefer and slighter than the major articles. The three in No. 4, 1955, are an essay (by a Hungarian contributor) on political developments in Hungary in 1944-45; a study of *The Upsurge of the Working-class Movement in Austria in 1905-07*, by a contributor from Erevan, based on Austrian newspapers and other contemporary printed sources; and a survey of the fate of existing museums and the formation of new ones in Soviet Russia during the turbulent years 1917-20.

The section *Letters and Notes* contains three items: one contributed by a Georgian history specialist from Sukhumi Teachers' Training College presents reasons for interpreting a particular old Georgian word differently from the way which has become accepted—to mean a slave of Homeric Age type rather than a slave of the classical period of slave-owning society.

The *Reviews* section opens with a survey of the 1954 issues of the principal historical journal in Bulgaria, and this is followed by reviews of eight books, including two American publications of 1953, a Princeton book on *The Origin of Soviet-American Diplomacy* and a Cambridge, Mass., work entitled *The United States and Mexico*.

The concluding pages of the journal are occupied by information on recent and forthcoming events in the fields of *Historical Studies in the USSR and Historical Studies Abroad*. One of the items in the former records the visit of a group of British historians to the USSR, and the latter includes an analysis of the report of a conference of historians in Western Germany.

B.P.

Fizika v Shkole (Physics in School)

This is the organ of the Ministry of Education of the RSFSR. We review here No. 1 (January-February) and No. 2 (March-April) of 1955.

As its name and description imply, this is a bi-monthly journal for those who teach physics in Russian schools. Both issues begin with general philosophical articles.

No. 1 contains a biographical article on Lenz, whom most people assume to have been a German, though he was in fact born in Estonia. No. 2 follows with a history of Moscow University from its foundation in 1755 in what is now the famous Red Square to its present splendid building on the Lenin Hills.

No. 1 contains an interesting little research on adhesives (can it be that Soviet physics masters have time for research?), and No. 2 has an article on the building and the technical details of the famous Metro.

Professor Popov contributes to No. 1 an article on the total eclipse observations in the Soviet Union last year, bringing to an end what may be called the general section. There follows a section devoted to "method", with articles on the teaching of physics, on the conception of the interference and diffraction of light as presented to Class 10 in the new physics syllabus, on the teaching of luminescence to the same class, on the presentation of the idea of mechanical energy, on the study of the direct current electric motor in Class 7, on the presentation of electro-magnetic oscillations in the new syllabus, and on astronomical observations in the first half of 1955 (apparently by the pupils themselves).

The experimental sections describe a new apparatus for observing the paths of ionising particles (apparently a "diffusion" apparatus similar to those in use here), the construction of radio receivers from available spare parts, and a battery-operated photo-relay. A new moving star chart for astronomical teaching is described—apparently this subject is taken very seriously in Soviet schools. A generator is described for producing alternating currents of audio-frequency for acoustical experiments, and an experimental demonstration of the connection between mass, force and acceleration. Some easily constructed devices for the signalling of temperature variations by means of bimetallic strips, and various other pieces of useful apparatus, are described.

Both numbers contain some discussion—both appreciative and critical—of the new physics syllabus and the new text-books. Evidently Soviet teachers, though they work in a system which, like most other continental educational systems, is much more centralised than ours, can and do make their voices heard on questions of professional interest.

Both issues conclude with notices of recent books and a "chronicle" or calendar of scientific worthies and events, including a short biographical article on Giordano Bruno, who was burned at the stake on February 17, 1600.

L.A.F.

FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE “FREE LABOUR” COLLECTIVE FARM

N. Vorobyev and P. Alexeyev

MEASURES are now being worked out to raise the output of agricultural products in the next five or six years. Taking part in this important and urgent work are Party and local Soviet workers, the leaders of the collective and state farms, agronomists, livestock experts (“zotechnicians”), engineers engaged in mechanising farm work, builders, and a wide range of active workers in the collective-farm villages. A group of agricultural specialists, in co-operation with the members of the Management Committee and the active workers of the “Free Labour” collective farm, Borisovskoye District, Belgorod Region, recently worked out a long-term plan for the all-round development of the social economy of this agricultural co-operative. Once drawn up, the plan was considered and approved at a general meeting of the members of the co-operative. The measures decided upon for the “Free Labour” farm have also been approved by the Borisovskoye District Committee of the Party and by the District Soviet Executive Committee. We publish below materials showing by what methods and through the utilisation of what resources this collective farm is to raise its output of grain, meat, milk, pork fat, wool, eggs and other agricultural products.

A Creative Approach

THE large village of Beryozovka lies stretched out like a narrow ribbon for twelve kilometres along the steep bank. It stands on the border dividing two great sister republics, the Russian Federation and the Soviet Ukraine. In Russian Beryozovka, just as in the neighbouring Ukrainian villages, there is no virgin soil, there are no wide-flung meadows and pastures, the lands belonging to the farms do not arrest the beholder by the vastness of their dimensions as in Siberia, say, or Kazakhstan, in the Kuban or the Volga valley. Here there is nowhere to expand to. All the land was ploughed and thickly settled centuries ago. You can stand on a hilltop and see dozens of villages around you.

Two years ago, a new chairman was elected on the “Free Labour” collective farm, Ivan Ivanovich Veprik, chief agronomist of the Borisovskoye Machine and Tractor Station. Before his arrival, the average milking yield had not risen higher than 600 litres per cow. Dairy farming was not the only branch that had been neglected. The pigs and sheep also showed low productivity. Arable farming also brought in little revenue. As for building new accommodation for the livestock, or storage space, no one so much as mentioned such things.

The new chairman, being an agronomist, first of all reviewed the field crops being cultivated and the techniques employed in their cultivation. It appeared that in the rotation of fodder crops the predominant position was held by grasses left *in situ* over a number of years, which rarely yielded a decent harvest in any given year.

After consultation with those in charge of the field crops and of the livestock the new chairman decided to introduce crops with a higher yield—maize, Sudanese grass, roots, potatoes. The good fodder had its effect. In the very first year the productivity of the cattle doubled. The size of the fleeces sheared began to increase noticeably, the pigs being fattened increased in weight, the poultry farms started to expand. The revenue from both field crops and livestock increased, the payments for labour performed could be raised.

The "Free Labour" collective farm has now attained the standing of an "average", "fairly good" enterprise.

When the decisions of the plenary session of the Central Committee had been thoroughly studied within the Party organisation, detailed discussions were held on questions concerning the development of the whole economy of the co-operative. Everyone agreed that an immediate start must be made on drawing up a long-term plan for developing the farm's productivity. To this end the Management Committee called together all active workers and invited experienced specialists from the District to come along. For several days the Management Committee's premises were the scene of the liveliest activity in the whole village. Into the building came dairywomen, stockmen, field and building workers, all wanting to give their advice, to recommend to the Management Committee the quickest ways of solving the problem of raising the whole economy to a higher level.

Three small tables have been pushed together and covered with one length of red bunting. At one end of this table the chairman of the collective farm, Veprik, bends over his papers. Beside him sits Victoria Yefimovna the agronomist, a recent graduate of the Timiryazev Academy. Although she has been working on the farm for only two years, people know and appreciate her and pay heed to what she has to say. Also present are Alexei Bibik, a young agronomist, Grigori Kovtun, secretary of the farm's Party organisation, and Vassili Verveiko, the forage officer; pencils in hand, they are working out various calculations. This group is settling the long-term plans for the development of grain production and field crop growing in general.

The chief livestock expert of the Borisovskoye MTS, Nina Yevseyevna Kretinina, and P. A. Lutai and P. A. Vinnik, who are leaders of stock-breeding brigades, are reckoning up how much grain, silage, roots and green fodder will be required to make it possible to double the milk yields and treble production of meat, wool and eggs within the next few years.

Building and mechanisation engineers F. I. Alexeyenko, I. K. Chistilin and F. D. Kulikovskiy, Senior Accountancy Instructor A. I. Rezanov and a large group of leading workers on the farm are working out draft plans for the construction of new farm buildings, living accommodation, and premises for social and cultural activities, and for the mechanisation of labour-absorbing processes in stock-raising work.

These people weigh every figure and discuss every point in the plan for the farm's future development. Figures are finally produced which are then presented to a general meeting for discussion. Here they are.

	1954	1955	1960
Harvest of grain crops (in centners per hectare*) ...	9.8	16	21
Milk output per 100 hectares of land (in centners) ...	38	80	280
Output of meat per 100 hectares of land (in centners) ...	17	20	33.8
Wool shorn from one sheep (in kilograms) ...	2.2	2.5	3.6
Output of eggs per 100 hectares under grain crops ...	4,533	9,333	25,600

The successful fulfilment of this programme will enable the farm to make a considerable increase in its deliveries to the State of grain, meat, milk, eggs and other agricultural produce. What are the resources, reserves and potential at the farm's disposal?

Reserves on the Grain-farming Side

FOR many years the plan stating areas to be sown to various grain crops came down to the "Free Labour" farm, as to all other collective farms, from above. Strict instructions were given on how much wheat, oats, barley, buckwheat,

* 1 centner = roughly 2cwt. 1 centner per hectare = 1.49 bushels per acre.

and so on was to be sown. Frequently one or other of these instructions would be totally unrelated to natural and economic conditions prevailing on the farm, would wreck the rotation of crops and hamper the creative initiative of its people.

It has long been known that on the fields of the Belgorod collective farms, as on those of their Ukrainian neighbours, spring wheat gives an uneven crop, often making difficulties for the collective farmers over the amount of grain they had calculated on. Winter wheat, however, guaranteed them a high yield of grain each year. No one, however, was bold enough to replace the unproductive spring wheat by winter wheat. Such a step seemed an impermissible infringement of the principle of unified planning. But now the farm has ample opportunity to show initiative and originality.

"I think," says the farm chairman to the agronomists, "we had better replace one field of spring wheat with winter wheat in each rotation. That will give us thousands of poods more grain."

The agronomists and farmers are very ready to agree. Everyone here knows that winter wheat brings in twice as much grain as spring wheat. The proposed change is unanimously agreed. In each group of fields involved in one crop-cycle there will be one field of spring wheat in place of the former two, but there will be an extra field of high-yielding winter wheat.

One very important resource is the possibility of extending the area sown to maize.* This invaluable crop both swells the stocks of grain and also provides excellent silage from its stalks.

Maize grows high on the private allotment of every member of the farm, yet it used to have no place in the common fields of the "Free Labour" agricultural co-operative. It was only last year that maize at last began to take its rightful place in the rotation of crops. Now 239 hectares are set aside for maize; in a year this area will grow to 300 hectares, and by 1960 it will reach 400 hectares.

In the rotation of field crops the extension of the maize area will reduce the area sown to barley, since this gives a lower yield. The farm has also decided to include maize in the rotation of fodder crops, and to sow it over part of the fallow arable land. Experience has shown that it is possible to allow maize to grow on such land till the "milky-waxen" stage of ripeness is reached, without prejudicing the next winter sowing of grain. This will enable the farm to acquire extra supplies of concentrated foods. Given a harvest yield of 30 centners per hectare, which is the figure planned for, the gross annual harvest of maize will amount to eight or ten thousand centners.

Increasing the area sown to winter wheat by reducing that sown to spring wheat, cutting down losses at harvest time, replacing low-yield by high-yield varieties, introducing maize into the field crop rotation—all these measures, taken together, will enable the farm to double the amount of grain harvested within the next two years, taking the 1954 figure as the starting point. Subsequent increases in harvest yield will be achieved purely by raising the productivity of the fields. For 1960 the farm is planning an average harvest yield of 21 centners per hectare.

The farm has worked out a big programme for raising the technical level of agriculture by introducing methods proved useful by the experience of leading workers, and of making full use of the achievements of the science of agronomy. Winter grain crops, for instance, will be sown on land which has just been under crops which make the best predecessors for grain. Fifteen tons of organic manures and four centners of mineral fertiliser will be used per hectare. Wide use will be made of such advanced methods as the "criss-

* See *Soviet Grain Production*, N. S. Khrushchov, *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL*, Vol. XVI, No. 1.

cross" and "narrow-row" sowing of eared-grain crops, the "square-cluster" sowing of maize, the use of selected varieties of seed, the "feeding" of fertilisers to growing crops, artificial pollination, prompt and thorough tillage, and so on.

Measures for raising the yields of industrial and vegetable crops have also been worked out. The harvest yield for sugar beet, for example, will go up from 220 centners this year to 300 centners in 1960, and that for potatoes from 120 to 170 centners.

How often it used to happen that when harvest time came round the collective farmers could not be better pleased as they looked at the heavy-laden fields of golden wheat. The combine harvester would make one round of the field, and in that time the bunker would have to be emptied two or even three times. One hectare would be reaped, and the harvest would be 20 or 25 centners. But then the reaping would be dragged out for ten, twenty or often even thirty days, and the combine would be stopping less and less frequently to unload. The very field which when reaping began was yielding 20-25 centners a day would now barely manage to show 7-8 centners for a day's reaping. The Borisovskoye collective farmers remember how the mechanisation men kept "struggling through the corn" for fifty whole days last year. What sort of harvest was to be expected from that!

Having learnt from bitter experience, this year the collective farmers and mechanisation workers have made a start early in the spring with getting the seed-drills, ploughs, cultivators, combines, reaping-machines, threshers, winnowing machinery and transport into full working order.

The "Free Labour" collective has put on record in its plan that the harvest is to be carried through in ten days.

Improving the Fodder Situation

WHEN you look down at the village of Beryozovka from above, you get the impression that it stands in the midst of a freshly-ploughed field. The ploughed land comes right up to the houses of the village, to the buildings of the stock-farms, to the office of the management committee. Even the farm club-house is surrounded. All the land belonging to the collective farm is arable. There are no meadows, no pastures, no woods to be seen.

This is why, when the long-term plan came up for approval by the general meeting, nothing caused the members of the farm so much concern as the fodder problem. After all, more than two thousand head of cattle is no joke. Try to feed that number! And it is not just feeding them, either, but getting the maximum productivity.

In his opening statement the chairman of the farm gave a detailed account of the lines of development envisaged for the farm's stock-breeding.

"In five years' time", he said, "we must be producing 280 centners of milk per hundred hectares of land. Have we the capacity to do this? We have. As you know, we now have only five milch cows per hundred hectares of land; we should have ten at least. What are the prospects? We will increase the milk herd from our large stock of young beasts, and thus, without expending our resources on buying fresh stock, raise our herd of productive cows to 330 by 1960. At the same time the milk yield per cow must be increased to 3,000 kilograms."

The farm also plans to raise production of meat, wool, eggs and other animal products. The output of meat per hundred hectares of land, for instance, is to go up from 17 centners in 1954 to 33.8 in 1960; the amount of wool sheared per sheep from 2.2 to 3.6 kilograms, the number of eggs from 80 to 120 per laying hen.

Pig-fattening also will be done on a much larger scale. This year the farm is setting aside 200 pigs for fattening ; in 1956 the figure is to be 260, and 400 in 1960. The average weight of each pig handed over to the State is to go up from 120 to 150 kilograms. Pork will account for 53 per cent of the farm's total meat production. The farm income from stock-farming will be at least 500,000 roubles this year ; in 1960 the figure will reach 1,500,000 roubles. The basis for these calculations is the increase in fodder production.

As has been stated above, the farm is increasing the maize yield, to provide thousands of centners of concentrated pig and poultry fodder and up to six tons of excellent maize silage per milch cow.

Annual grasses are an important fodder crop. Experiments have shown that local conditions make Sudanese grass the most suitable. Compared with other annual grasses, it has a number of advantages. It grows strongly, giving two or three mowings in the course of one summer and pasture afterwards. The seed and its by-products are good pig and poultry fodder. Land sown to Sudanese grass is to account for more than 80 hectares in the fodder crop rotations.

Fodder roots, fruits of the melon family, and potatoes, have hitherto been fed only to pigs. These crops are now to be grown on a much wider scale. This will make it possible to allocate a sufficient quantity of juicy fodder to the milk herds.

An important fodder reserve is the waste product of sugar refineries. The "Free Labour" collective farm sows 300 hectares of sugar beet every year. This industrial crop not only increases cash revenue, but helps to put fodder supplies on a firm footing. Suffice it to say that last year the "Free Labour" farm received seventeen thousand centners of pulp, six or seven tons per milch cow. With such valuable fodder available, rapid advances in dairy farming are possible.

It must be admitted, however, that beet pulp is made use of most inadequately. Some farms complain of the shortage of succulent fodder, yet completely fail to realise the value of beet pulp, although the sugar refinery is not far away. Last autumn a large part of the pulp supply was left to lie at the factory till it went sour, and some was lost even on the farms.

The "Free Labour" farm is now paying particular attention to the use of beet pulp. The sugar-beet fields, however, yield another form of valuable fodder also ; the leaves and stalks can be made into silage. The farm is planning to put down six thousand centners of such silage this year and twelve thousand in 1960. This year the fodder budget will comprise, in centners per cow: 22 of coarse fodder, 80 of juicy fodder, 75 of green fodder and 5 of concentrated feeding-stuffs.

It is evident that the farms of the Borisovskoye District (and of other districts of the Belgorod region) are able to provide ample feed for the farm stock, even in the absence of pasture. Moreover, they could and should issue fodder as a payment in kind against workdays, for the beasts which are the personal property of the collective farmers. This is what the "Free Labour" farm is doing. During the current year sufficient stocks of fodder will be laid in to make possible the issue of fodder to the members of the farm for their personal livestock.

The chairman was asked at the meeting how much corn and how much money it was planned to pay per workday. "I'm coming to the workday payments", he replied. "You know what a bad year 1954 was ; but even then we were able to provide enough corn and other produce for the farm members' needs. This year we plan to give three kilograms of corn and four and a half roubles in cash per workday. In 1960 this scale will be doubled, both in cash and in kind."

The Building Programme

two or three years ago, on a hilltop not far from the farm office, there stood some dilapidated little thatched cowsheds, their walls peeling and flaking and the wind whistling through them.

Previous farm chairmen used to excuse themselves: "There are no woods in these parts, they haven't found anywhere to quarry stone yet, and as for clay, well, as you see, it doesn't hold."

This line of argument is still, alas, put forward by some of those at the heads of farms in the region. Farms in this part of the country have great difficulties to cope with as regards building, certainly. But given the will to overcome them, and the exercise of a little ingenuity, building can be done. On the "Free Labour" farm, the dilapidated old sheds have been replaced by new buildings, light and spacious, made of breeze blocks. Everything depends on the creative initiative of the people concerned.

The new chairman, the Party members and the farm's livestock specialists and building workers, set themselves the task of reconstructing the whole of the accommodation for the stock. For years there had been mountains of slag lying at the nearest railway station. Carts and lorries began to make their way towards the station. In a single summer enough slag to build three cattle-sheds was collected. Cement and slate were also acquired, and in the autumn work on the buildings began. All the farm craftsmen, stonemasons, carpenters, roof-layers, took part. Then the fitters and electricians took over. They laid on piped water, put in automatic drinking-troughs and ran in an electric power line.

The long-term plan covering the next five or six years includes detailed projects for the construction of buildings for the social, cultural and domestic needs of the community. There is money available for all these things. The cash revenue of the farm will increase from one million roubles last year to 3,605,000 roubles in 1960.

In the current year the farm plans to build a calf-house for 160 beasts, a piggery housing 300 head of pigs, and two silo towers fitted with water-pressure tanks and a wind motor. The general meeting endorsed the allocation of the required sums. Expenditure for the repair of existing buildings and the construction of a mechanised threshing-floor has also been sanctioned.

In 1956, one cow-byre, one fodder-processing shed, one bath-house, one field-camp and one day-nursery are to be erected. A year later the farm will acquire new granaries, new farm management premises and another day-nursery, and the foundations for a large House of Culture will be laid. Over the five-year period the farm is to spend about two million roubles on its building programme.

All the premises used for livestock will be equipped with overhead trolley cables and machinery for chopping, steaming and washing fodder, and there are plans for installing electric milking and shearing equipment.

The general meeting enthusiastically and unanimously approved the plans for building and for mechanising jobs which now absorb a great deal of labour in stock-farming.

Here, as in raising the fertility of the fields, a decisive part must be played by the machine and tractor station. Hence the collective farmers consulted tractor foremen Grigori Verveiko and Alexander Svinarenko in order to plot the exact measures needed to ensure making better use of available machinery in both crop- and stock-farming. The current year will see the mechanisation of such labour-consuming jobs as bringing water supplies to the stock farms, laying down silage and processing fodder.

“ Levelling-up ” to the Standard of the Best Farms

THERE is not much time left before work begins in the fields. The nearer the approach of spring, the busier the days become in a collective-farm village.

Manure carts are on their way to the fields from the stock-yards, sleighs are off to the railway station to pick up phosphates. News comes in that the Kuban has dispatched a large consignment of seed maize. This news flashes round all the farms in the District, for are not 4,000 hectares or so of land to be sown to maize this year ?

On the farms people are very much concerned now about how best to sow the maize and what cultivation methods to apply, so as to get a big yield the very first year these large areas are sown.

The Ukrainian Zolochiv District farms, which can show excellent results in maize and sugar-beet cultivation, are not only ready and willing to share their knowledge with their Borisovskoye neighbours, but have also promised to contribute twenty tons of maize for seed.



WE have no small number of farms doing fine work, farms which produce 300-500 or even 800 and 1,000 centners of milk and 40-50 or more centners of meat for every hundred hectares of land, farms which are successfully developing sheep and poultry farming and earning revenues running into millions of roubles. Such farms are an example to others, and the others are trying to reach the same level as these shining examples, are learning from their experience.

There are still, however, many farms which have not yet achieved a high level of development in their communal economy, although they have at their disposal everything necessary to bring themselves up to the standards of the leading farms in the next few years. If such farms, the “Free Labour” farm and thousands like it, succeed in making a reality of the long-term plans they have drawn up, the country will obtain all the produce it needs to meet the requirements of the working people.

Beryozovka, March 1955. Abridged from PRAVDA, March 14, 1955.

Book Reviews

INTERESTING BUT CARELESS

Soviet Russia, An Introduction. Jacob Miller. (Hutchinson's University Library, 8/6.)

"THE most obvious thing that the Russian people have done," writes Mr. Miller (p. 13), "and one which influences all their other work, is the industrialisation of their country." Quite a number of countries have become industrialised in the twentieth century: some observers have thought that what was most obvious, and indeed striking, about the Russian experience was not so much industrialisation as the introduction of socialism. Mr. Miller does not discuss this view, he simply ignores it. The revolution of October 1917 is for him just a "political revolution" (as contrasted with an "industrial revolution") such as happened earlier in England and in France (pp. 17, 102), and it was about industrialisation (p. 16). Who fought against whom, and why, in the Civil War, is not at all clear: "the supposed political dividing lines ran through rather than between the armies. . . ." (p. 19). "Early Soviet Socialism" is simply a convenient name for the state of affairs in Russia, 1917-52 (p. 11).

According to the *Short History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (which Mr. Miller notes—p. 140—to be "the most important book of Early Soviet Socialism" and "completely neglected by specialists on Russia"), a change of fundamental significance came about in Soviet life with the completion of the Second Five-Year Plan of 1933-37, namely the actual achievement of socialism. Since then, it is held, the Soviet economy and social order has been essentially socialistic, the "last exploiting class" (the kulaks) having been eliminated. The turning-point was marked by the adoption of a new Constitution. The principal difference of approach between some books about the Soviet Union and others is often taken nowadays to be whether the writer agrees with this evaluation of what happened in the mid-thirties or not.

Mr. Miller passes by the whole problem. For him what happened in and around 1936 was simply the completion of "industrialisation", and he treats of the Soviet economy thereafter as being essentially similar to our own, at least as it was in war-time. Soviet workers are concerned at their meetings with "all the ordinary problems of production anywhere in conditions of full employment" (p. 51). In his survey of Soviet economic life Mr. Miller fails, however, to find us a Soviet shareholders' meeting. Nevertheless, he does reveal the possession by the trade unions of powers

and privileges which are clearly the key to the absence of strikes in the Soviet Union, and cannot but suggest that there is some fundamental difference between the social structure of that country and the capitalist countries which is more important than Mr. Miller chooses to admit. Is it really sufficient to state that "the Russian economy differs from its contemporaries in that the government decides, and decides in real and not financial terms, what changes there shall be in the proportions of the national wealth dedicated to each purpose" (p. 65)?

The review of Russian history included in the book contains some useful information, but this is strangely selected. Confidence in Mr. Miller's bolder generalisations is unfortunately impaired by his carelessness on elementary points. Thus, to state (p. 91) that in 1654, with the reunification of the Ukraine and Russia, "in law the three Russian peoples were once more under one rule", is simply not true, for Byelorussia was not brought back to the fold until 1772-95; and a passage on p. 89 makes plain that what has misled Mr. Miller here is that he thinks Pskov (recovered in 1510) to be a Byelorussian city. Again, the quotation from Chaucer which is used twice (pp. 85, 115) is given incorrectly: it is not "oft had he rayseed in Lettice [*sic*] and in Pruce" but "in Lettow had he rayseed and in Ruce" (*Prologue*, 1, 54). That Mr. Miller should refer to the causes of the Reform of 1861 (pp. 14, 33) without letting on that a wave of peasant revolts swept Russia in 1859-61 (or even referring to Tsar Alexander II's well-known remark on the subject) is perhaps to be expected in view of his consistent care not to let the class struggle rear its ugly head between the pages of this book.

Pages 45-50 give an interesting and suggestive brief account of problems and change in the spheres of agriculture and food supplies in 1950-54. As regards industrial developments in recent times, however, surely it is exaggerating to write (p. 66) that "the only [consumer goods] industries there are now are textiles, footwear and food-processing; other things are still, even after the improvements of 1953, produced in the holes and corners of the economy" *Pobeda* and *Moskwich* cars, for instance, are certainly consumer goods and as certainly are not produced in any holes or corners.

Readers of this journal will note that, in Mr. Miller's view, "most of its articles . . . are intended to serve friendship between the two countries by pretending that the difficulties in the way of friendship are slight" (p. 143).

BRIAN PEARCE.

BOTVINNIK AND SMYSLOV

World Chess Championship 1954. H. Golombek. (MacGibbon & Kee, 15/-.)

THIS book is a worthy record of a world championship match of outstanding interest. Mr. Golombek gives not only the score of each game, together with his own really first-class analysis, but also the time position on each move of the match. This is most valuable, as is his assessment of the psychological state of both players during the ups and downs of the tournament. In addition, his background descriptions give an amusing picture of Soviet chess fans, in their myriads. Not the least of the book's attractions is the fact that for once we have a book on chess written in a style that is entertaining as well as instructive.

K.W.

A MEMORY AND A DELIGHT

Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp. From the play by Nina Gernet. Ill. Kathleen Dance. (Publicity Products, London, 2/6.)

ALL who were fortunate enough to see Sergei Obraztsov's magnificent production of the classic fairy tale at the London Casino last summer* will be delighted with this book. For those who were not so fortunate, this publication will be a considerable compensation. The colour plates and illustrations were made in the theatre, and the text is a condensation of the original.

There can be no doubt that this book will enjoy wide popularity as an ideal Christmas or birthday present, for young and old alike, for years to come.

K.W.

DOSTOIEVSKY ON TOUR

Summer Impressions. Fyodor Dostoevsky. Tr. K. Fitzlyon. Ill. P. Jullian. (John Calder, 9/6.)

THIS pleasantly produced little book (the illustrations are a trifle fussy) gives an amusing sidelight on Dostoevsky as a wayward tourist, who forgets to "see the sights" ("... never saw St. Paul's ... somehow hardly decent for a traveller not to have seen it"), digresses into theatre criticism and character analysis, merges with the raucous midnight crowds of the East End or the glossy parade of the Palais Royal, starts a chapter "And so I am in Paris ..." (where he had promised the reader to be several chapters before), and ends it "... what am I talking about? I am not in Paris yet ..."

He flings off a half-page sketch of London's outcasts, which is startlingly close in spirit and observation to Dickens's Tom-all-alone's, with almost flamboyant ease,

and plunges headlong into an *Essay on the Bourgeois*, which begins in sarcasm, proceeds through anger into serious philosophy interlarded with sharply concrete actuality, and fetches up in a spiral disquisition on "unutterable high-mindedness" which gets funnier and funnier. The book is peppered with dry aphorisms—"The Parisian for the most part does not care whether it is true love or a good counterfeit"; "A man without a million is ... a man with whom anything is done that anyone wants"; "Enjoying a bird's-eye view of things does not mean looking down on them".

The sententious introduction is overweight for such agreeable impressionism. On pages 41 and 43, for "intelligent man" and "intelligent people" read *intellectual* and *intellectuals*.

S.J.

War and Peace. L. Tolstoy. Tr. L. and A. Maude. (Oxford University Press, 16/-, r.e.)

IT is pleasing to see this great classic re-issued in the handy one-volume edition, with its beautiful clear type and fine paper. It is to be hoped that a new generation of readers will be won for this masterpiece and its complex and fascinating presentation of the other side of Napoleon's Russian campaign, and that some of them at least may agree with Galsworthy that it is "the greatest historical novel ever written". This edition includes useful chronological tables, notes and maps: an admirable production.

S.J.

SUKHANOV'S NOTES ON THE REVOLUTION

The Russian Revolution, 1917: A Personal Record. N. N. Sukhanov. (Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 42/-.) Abridged from *Notes on the Revolution* (1922).

"DURING the past few days I have been glancing through Sukhanov's *Notes on the Revolution*. What strikes me particularly is the pedantry ... of all the heroes of the Second International ... their slavish imitation of the past. ... Up to now they have seen capitalism and bourgeois democracy in Europe follow a definite path of development, and they cannot conceive that this path can be taken as a model only *mutatis mutandis*, only with certain modifications (quite insignificant from the standpoint of world history). ... they are complete strangers to the idea that, although the development of world history as a whole follows general laws, this does not in the least preclude, but, on the contrary presupposes, the possibility that certain periods of development

* See ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL, Vol. XV, No. 3.

may display peculiar features in form or in order of development. For instance, it does not even occur to them that Russia . . . could, and was indeed bound to, reveal certain peculiar features which . . . distinguish her revolution from all previous revolutions in West European countries . . .

"Infinitely commonplace . . . is the argument . . . that we are not yet ripe for Socialism . . . why cannot we begin by creating the prerequisites . . . and then, with the aid of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations?"

" . . . Napoleon once wrote: *On s'engage, et puis—on voit*. . . Well, we first plunged into a big battle in October, 1917, and later we saw the details of development . . . And now there can be no doubt that, in the main, we have been victorious.

"It never occurs to our Sukhanovs . . . that if it were not for this, revolutions could not be made at all. It never occurs to our European philistines that subsequent revolutions in Oriental countries will undoubtedly display even more peculiar features. . . .

"It need hardly be said that a textbook written on Kautskyan lines was a useful thing in its day. But it is really high time to abandon the idea that this textbook foresaw all forms of development of subsequent world history."

V. I. LENIN.

January 1923.

The preface to the new abridged edition from the Oxford University Press claims that Sukhanov's book was at first (i.e. in the early 1920s) very well received by Soviet theoreticians, and that only "by the end of the twenties" was it found to be "out of harmony with the official theories of the revolution then being elaborated by Stalin's faction." The above extracts from Lenin's review of the work shortly after its appearance show that, to say the least, these claims are misleading.

S.J.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

History of the Cold War. Kenneth Ingram.
(Darwen Finlayson, 15/-)

Masses and Mainstream, May 1955. (35 cents.)

Soviet Studies, Vol. VI, No. 4. (Blackwell, 9/-)

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S C R LONDON EVENTS

MAY—JULY 1955

(All at 14 Kensington Square unless otherwise stated.)

May

- 6th : **Pavlovian Medicine.** *Dr. B. H. Kirman.* Lecture.
- 15th : **Seventh & Tenth Symphonies (Shostakovich), Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra.** Conductor : *E. Mravinsky.* Tape-recording recital.
- 18th : **Soviet Education, 1937-1955.** *Lady Simon of Wythenshawe.* Lecture. At College of Preceptors, 2/3 Bloomsbury Square, W.C.1.
- 20th : **Games from USSR Chess Championships 1955.** *R. G. Wade.* Lecture.
- 31st : **Children's Film Show.** *Journey to the Moon* (first British showing); *It Happened in the North*; *Naughty Kitten*; *A Day at the Moscow Zoo.* For ages eight and over. Adults not admitted without children.

June

- 2nd : **Annual General Meeting of Science Section.** Sherry party. (Section members only.)
- 7th : **Soviet Housing Law.** *W. Sedley.* (Fifth in series of law lectures by British lawyers who visited USSR September 1954.) At Royal Scottish Corporation, Fetter Lane, Fleet Street, E.C.4.
- 9th : **New Soviet Textbook on Cromwellian Revolution in England.** *Christopher Hill.* Lecture.
- 10th : **Medical Visit to USSR 1954.** *Dr. L. Crome.* Lantern lecture.
- 12th : **Seventh Symphony (Prokofiev) and Second Symphony (Kabalevsky), etc.** Tape-recording recital.
- 17th : **Lightning Chess Tournament.**
- 20th : **Current Soviet Research on Educational Psychology.** *Brian Simon, M.A.* Lecture. At the Institute of Education, Malet Street, W.C.1.
- 21st : **Soviet Commercial Arbitration.** *Dudley Collard.* (Final lecture of series as June 7 above.)
- 25th : **Midsummer Dance.** *Don Raine Young Orchestra.* Refreshments, members' bar, etc.
- 27th : **Soviet Work on Classical History.** *Robert Browning, M.A.* Lecture.

July

4th-22nd :

Intensive Russian Language Course. *Intermediate & Advanced* (10 classes each). Conversation, reading, translation and interpreting. Not for beginners.

PRESS STATEMENT

THE Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR learns with great interest of the proposal of the British Council for an expansion of cultural relations between Britain and the USSR. Any such expansion will be welcomed by the Society, which has for thirty years been engaged in fostering relations between the professions of the two countries.

The Society will be glad to make available its unique library and collections of photographic, illustrative and other materials, together with its experience in this field, to all those interested in obtaining information about Soviet culture and in providing Soviet institutions with information on British culture.

It wishes to place on record at this moment its appreciation of the co-operation and assistance which it has received over so many years from the leading British academic, professional and other bodies, without which its work of arranging for representative groups to visit the USSR, and of enabling visiting Soviet groups to see a true cross-section of British professional life, would have been impossible.

It offers its help to the British Council in any future projects where it may be of value, and looks forward to co-operation in the development of cultural relations between our own country and the USSR.

*D. T. Richnell, Honorary Secretary,
Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR. 16.5.55.*

The SCR Lecture Service

offers the information and knowledge of SCR specialist members (many of whom have recently visited the USSR) to schools, societies, professional organisations, and so on.

This comprehensive lecture service provides unique facilities for all those who would like a factual account of developments in the USSR. Competent lecturers and tutors of university standard, all of whom are specialists in their own fields, are available for single lectures or for day or weekend schools. Almost all lecturers on the SCR panel have visited the USSR and studied their subjects at first hand; many are pre-eminent in their specialities. Exhibition material, photographs, lantern slides and other visual aids are available with many of the lectures; others can be illustrated with disc or tape recordings.

The lecture service covers most aspects of cultural and scientific life in the USSR. Examples of the more generalised lectures are those giving the background of life in the Soviet Union, with special emphasis on Education, Health Service, Law, Mother and Child Care, Music, Literature and the Arts, Religion, Sports, and so on. The more specialised lectures include: A Visit to the Holy City of Zagorsk, Classical and Ancient History Studies, Moscow University, Housing Law, Studies in English History, Finance, Cultural Life among the Former Colonial Peoples (in Armenia, Georgia, North Ossetia, Tadzhikistan, Uzbekistan), Cancer Research, Agricultural Economics, The Works of Chekhov, and so on.

This service can be of great value to club secretaries and organisers in preparing their autumn programmes. For further information and details, please write to the Hon. Secretary, Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR, 14 Kensington Square, London, W.8

(A nominal fee is charged for each lecture, to defray administrative expenses.)

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The SCR is an independent non-political British society, founded in 1924, for the two-way exchange of visits and the publication of information on the traditions and development of both countries in the arts and sciences.

Inquiries (with stamped addressed envelope) should be sent to

The Secretary

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